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THE
DRAMATIC WORKS
OF
MARK ANTHONY MEILAN;
CONSISTING OF
THREE TRAGEDIES,
EMILIA,
NORTHUMBERLAND,
THE FRIENDS.

As they were presented to the MANAGERS of both our
THEATRES, BUT REFUSED.

PUBLISHED BY WAY OF AN APPEAL FROM THE
ARBITRARY DECISIONS OF THE
DESPOTS of the DRAMA,
TO

CANDOUR
AND THE
LOVERS OF THEATRICAL AMUSEMENTS,
Whose LIBERALITY so amply aggrandizes those
DEFAULTERS.

Diversions of this kind [*speaking of Tragedy*] wear out of
our Thoughts, every thing that is mean and little. They
cherish and cultivate that humanity, which is the Ornament
of our Nature. They soften Insolence, soothe Affliction,
and subdue the Mind to the Dispensations of Providence.

SPECTATOR. No. 39.

L O N D O N,
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and URQUHART, under the ROYAL EXCHANGE; and
C. MARSH, CHARING-CROSS.

THE
DRAMATIC WORKS

MARK ANTHONY MELLOR

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P R E F A C E.

THE conduct of theatrical managers, has ever been considered open to the attacks of criticism: they are the servants of his majesty, and subject to the controul of one of his household officers: they can enact nothing of themselves, *before* the curtain, however absolutely they may reign in the green room. This restraint upon their management, supposes them capable of doing wrong; and in the same manner as a free government, allows every subject the power of commenting upon administration, so, by parity of reasoning, are the ministers of the drama, objects of literary investigation: the Author of the three following tragedies, therefore, uses no more than his unalienable privilege, whilst he endeavours to point out the misconduct of characters, that, availing themselves of public folly, have acquired public veneration.

But to accuse, without having,—at least, in his own opinion,—sufficient ground for complaint, would not be consistent with that candour which, as he admires it in others, he would gladly be thought his self to possess: he will, therefore, immediately enter on the design of this preface, by giving, what he calls, a history of his works.

His

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His first production was, *Northumberland*, which, after Mr. GARRICK's refusal of it, was presented to Mr. COLMAN, who, having kept it a long time unnecessarily in his hands, promising from week to week, but always neglecting to peruse it, and consequently, subjecting the Author to many fruitless and lacquey like attendances at his house, dismissed the piece with observing, that, as it was too striking an imitation of the *Lady Jane Grey* of Mr. ROWE; as the unities were not adhered to; as the scenes were, many of them, too short or desultory; "with many other *As's*," it would not answer the purpose of public exhibition.

Upon this, the Author has only to observe, that managers, as well as meaner men, ought to be consistent in their sentiments and conduct: that they are not, appears to him in a very flagrant light, when he considers the reception they afforded Mr. FRANKLIN's *Earl of Warwick*. That play is wholly borrowed from SHAKESPEARE, and every incident contained in the imitation, except such as the fancy of the poet has thrown into it at the expence of history, is worked up in the original, with all the spirit of its excellent author. This is by no means intended to depreciate the merit of Mr. FRANKLIN; his performances have ever afforded the present commentator pleasure, and excited him to wish his self endowed with abilities to equal him.

His second piece, which begins this publication, was, in like manner, put first into the hands of
Mr.

P R E F A C E.

MR. GARRICK, and, in like manner also, returned, as being the same play with SHAKESPEARE'S *Measure for Measure*. It was afterwards sent under a cover to Mr. POWELL, and, with it, the author's permission to perform it for his own benefit, in case he approved the piece; to which step, he was induced from a reflection, that the most effectual way to succeed in his wishes, might be by securing the interest of a manager, at the expence of his own.

But the event of this, turned out in the same manner as before; and here, the author might give two or three curious anecdotes of the *sensible* Mr. POWELL, and as many polite letters, penned in all the elegance of stile, had not his decease precluded such kind of comment.

Mr. GARRICK, however, as living, claims an answer: the author therefore challenges him to prove, that *Measure for Measure* and *Emilia* are the same plays; let any one peruse them, and he will see they are as different from each other, as any two pieces need to be, for conveying pleasure to the same audience, provided, in other particulars, *Emilia* were unexceptionable.

His last piece, *The Friends*, being finished, was put into the hands of Mr. COLMAN, who, with his usual politeness, exacted the customary homage of attendance from the author, and *honoured* him with several audiences in his passage; till, at last, tired into compliance, he delivered the play by a servant, at his house, but without any written,
or

P R E F A C E.

or even verbal message, expressive of his sentiments upon it.

Notwithstanding this inelegant behaviour, the author, careful of Mr. COLMAN's reputation, in a letter addressed to him, ascribed this breach of good manners to his servant, who, he said, must have neglected to execute his commission; and, accordingly, Mr. COLMAN transmitted him the following answer, while, in the mean time, the piece was submitted to Mr. GARRICK, who returned it with a negative.

Mr. COLMAN's letter was as follows:

" SIR,

" When I returned your tragedy, I think I
" sent a few lines with the packet. I know I
" intended to do so, but will not be positive whe-
" ther the omission was owing to the neglect of the
" servant, or to my own inadvertence. It is im-
" possible for me to enter into a minute discussion
" of the merits or demerits of every piece sent for
" my perusal; but you may be assured, that I
" should not have returned your play, had I
" thought it likely to succeed in the representa-
" tion.

" I am, &c.

" G. COLMAN."

The following queries may, with propriety, be submitted to every lover of the drama; and the
answers

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answers they must suggest to unprejudiced consideration, save the author any further pains in prolonging this preface.—Is it consistent with the dignity of a royal theatre, to represent so few pieces in a season, as, at present, appear on either of our stages? Does it not appear, from the re-iterated exhibitions of MURPHY, BICKERSTAFF, and some others, that managers are partial to a select number of authors, who are, as it were, retained for their purpose? Do they, by this conduct, discharge their duty to the town?—Is it consonant to the principles of justice, that managers should, by altering old plays, whose authors perhaps lived in penury and want, save themselves the expence of bringing on new ones? With what pretence to public countenance, can a man, famous for nothing, as a writer, but the knack of Prologue manufacturing, assume the privilege of altering the works of some of the best poets, England has produced? Does the conduct of that man appear irreproachable, who dams up the channel of complaint, by purchasing, for that purpose, a share in almost every news-paper? Is not the idea of a manager's attempting to enoble a poet,—already immortal in his works,—by sing-song and dumb shew, truly absurd? Do not the theatres, by their late exhibitions, seem to vie with each other, for the point of appearing most ridiculous? Should not managers, in the article of rejecting plays, as well as those for which they procure licences, be controulable

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trouable by higher powers? If this were once the case, would the comedy of *Man and Wife*, have ever disgraced the stage? Is not this an incontrovertible instance, that managers act merely for their own sordid interest, abstracted from all considerations of public good?—The answer to each of these questions cannot be given, without fixing a blot upon the conduct of those, they principally concern.

When *one* manager shall cease to act from principles of envy, excited thereto by the success of his rival; when the number of actors upon our stage shall, under the hand of encouragement, be such, that instead of poets writing for performers, performers shall act for poets, nor the poverty of the drama be a tacit reason for the rejection of pieces, under the specious pretence of their wanting merit; when the same manager shall be more modest, than to boast in a news-paper, devoted to his service, that the masterly hand of a ——— was visible in the exhibition of a piece, originally composed by the pen of a DRYDEN: when another, unenvious of the former's reputation, shall neglect to produce the most wretched of all comedies, which, had it not been written by his self, would have for ever slept in that obscurity it deserved, nor have still the more disgraced him, when acted as a farce, and shall be tender of others' labours, from the recollection of a circumstance in his own conduct;—that of mutilating a play, to make one
of

P R E F A C E.

of its characters, no more than equal to the abilities of a performer, whose age and infirmities make his continuance on the stage affecting to humanity, and demanding, for this mighty service done the public, a recompence previous to its appearance, then may fatyr drop her pen, and for ever after remain silent.

The author cannot, however, close this preface, which is become already too prolix, without observing, that when he speaks of a repulse from managers, he would not be understood to complain of it, as a misfortune peculiar to his self, neither would he have the present publication considered as coming from a man, whose vanity will suffer him to conceive he has, of all writers, the most title to an appeal of this nature: he only proposes, by this method, setting an example to every one under the same predicament with his self. Unsuccessful writers, by publishing their attempts to improve and entertain, might, when the odium of novelty were once removed, reap the benefit of their labours in the closet, after being excluded from the stage; and, at last, open the eyes of the public to the inattention of the procurators of their pleasure; the benefit might not terminate here; they would, perhaps, stimulate those defaulters to a different conduct; and, if this were once the case, we should not see the number of new exhibitions in a season so very inconsiderable, nor observe foreign authors pillaged, obsolete plays revived, or the wretched mummery

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mummery of jubilees and pantomimes, incroaching on the dominion of understanding and true taste, whilst the attempts of vernacular, living and real genius, are neglected and despised.

To the candor of public criticism, the present author appeals, and is content to stand or fall by its decision; it is therefore hoped, that the single circumstance of a refusal at the theatres, will not subject his works to prejudication. The volume here recommended, is offered to the town as a specimen of what, if they honour it with their approbation, the author has still to publish; it being his fixed determination, no longer to attempt his entrance at a door, which avarice sits to guard, and never opens but for her own immediate interest.

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EMILIA.

A

TRAGEDY.

BY

MARK ANTHONY MEILAN.

I pray you, in your letters
When you shall these unhappy deeds relate,
Write of me as I am.—Then must you speak
Of one, that lov'd——not wisely but too well.

SHAKESPEARE.

L O N D O N,
Printed by EDWARD COX, in *Russel-street, Covent Garden*,
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C. MARSH, *Charing-Cross*.

E M I L I A .

T R A G E D Y

IN THREE ACTS



BY
J. H. ...
...

LONDON :

...

...

...

...

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE hint for the following tragedy was taken from the Spectator, No. 491. The story mentions, that a certain governor, captivated with the beauty of a lady, in order to effectuate his desires, caused the husband to be apprehended on a false charge; that when she applied in his behalf, he disclosed the terms, on which alone, a pardon could be procured; that on her revealing this overture to her husband, his fears induced him to persuade her, tho' indeed obliquely, to preserve him; that a mistaken tenderness added weight to those persuasions and brought about the governor's gratification; that notwithstanding this, he ordered the sentence to be executed; and that in revenge, she appealed to the duke of Burgundy, and obtained the following redress, "that her seducer should marry her, and sign a gift of his whole estate to her after his decease," upon which, to secure her in the quiet possession of the bequest, he commanded his immediate execution.

Such are the circumstances of the story: how far the author has deviated from them, will appear in the sequel. The scene is transferred to Padua, and the duke brought into the forest for the preservation of the unities; the characters of Sebastian and the banditti, with all the added incidents, are introduced to enlarge, and make more interesting the plan: what other liberties have been taken must be ascribed to the following considerations. First,
It

ADVERTISEMENT.

It is not consistent with poetical justice that the husband should suffer undeservingly; he says *undeservingly*, because secondly, a husband's propounding for his safety by the violation of a wife's honour, is shocking to nature, and could never be represented before an audience. Thirdly, The reparation extorted from the governor by the duke is specious. Fourthly, The implication of the wife's accepting that reparation, is irreconcilable with the love she had shewn her first husband: and lastly, the tacit intimation of surviving her innocence, is repugnant to the business of the drama, for causes tho' they may alleviate crimes, cannot remove them.

THE CHARACTERS.

MECENAS, Duke of Venice.

ALBERT, Commandant of Padua.

SEBASTIAN, and REGINALD; assassins.

JULIO, a wealthy citizen.

ROLANDO, LUCIUS, VALENTINE and LEOLINE,
banished banditti.

EMILIA, wife of Julio.

PROVOST and FRIAR.

CORNELIO, the duke's gentleman.

SERVANTS, ATTENDANTS of the duke, OTHER
BANDITTI and COMMON PEOPLE.

The Scene lies partly at Padua, and partly in a
forest bordering on the suburbs.

E M I L I A.

A C T I.

SCENE I. *An Apartment in the
House of Albert.*

ALBERT. SEBASTIAN.

ALBERT.

N O, no Sebastian,—why, I think it fitting
To have thy helping hand, is, that I cannot,
Directly as I would, proceed to gratify
The rage of my desires upon Emilia;
Whose beauty, though 'tis great, falls yet far short
Of what her soul adorns :—I mean her virtue.

SEBASTIAN.

I understand you well ;—on with your story.

B

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

Her husband, whom, for divers weighty reasons,—
 E'er he did that, for which he soon must suffer,—
 I, as my friend esteem'd, was lately cited
 T' appear before the judge, and there, make answer
 To a preferred charge of grossest treason,
 Practis'd and bent against the duke of Venice,
 Our worthy and good lord.

SEBASTIAN.

Proceed.

ALBERT.

Conviction

Follow'd his crime, and now he's bound in fetters
 Under the doom of death ;—his wife Emilia,
 Loving him much, from day to day comes hither
 Pleading his life ; but, so her tears add beauty
 To the fair cheeks they stain, that I, believe me,
 With an unlawful flame, myself consuming,
 Hear not the suit she makes.

SEBASTIAN.

'Tis well, what follows ?

ALBERT.

Why it should be, I know not, but 'tis certain,
 What in her prosp'rous days, the smile of beauty
 Ne'er could effect ; the tears and sorrows of it
 Have in my heart produc'd.—in vain Sebastian
 Have I essay'd to quench the flame that burns me ;
 Whilst what I do, resembling unctious matter
 Into a furnace thrown, but makes it hotter,
 Raising a ten-fold blaze.

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Well fir, what further?

ALBERT.

This gentleman condemn'd, whose name is Julio,
(One of the richest citizens in Padua,)
Was to the duke most dear:—now I, Sebastian,
No less accounted of, owe to his grace,
The fortunes I possess;—when young, he took me
Under his eye, planted me in his favour;
And to crown all; alledging certain service,
I did him in the wars to which he led me;
Made me commandant here; where, tho' my power,
Great in itself, may licence all I covet;
Yet as for reasons of much weight, I cannot
Do what I would, in day light,—I have taken
Thee to instruct me.

SEBASTIAN.

You are young, and have not
Climb'd to the knowledge of such arts, as soonest
Work on weak female bosoms:—I have labour'd
Thirty long years, and in that time, unravell'd
The windings of the sex.

ALBERT.

No more of that;
I do believe thee apt.

SEBASTIAN.

Then let me think.—
When comes th' appointed time for execution?

ALBERT.

It is already past; but I, in show
 Of mercy for the man, have still delay'd it:
 Our last accorded grace expires to morrow,
 When he must die;---the warrant's sign'd already
 And issued to the provost.

SEBASTIAN.

Good.

ALBERT.

And heaven
 Seem so to meet my wish, that now her sister,
 Whom I have still found dang'rous to oppose me,
 On a sick bed is laid; therefore, Sebastian,
 What we may think expedient to be practis'd,
 Must be resolv'd on quickly.

SEBASTIAN.

So far well.

Have you address'd the woman?

ALBERT.

Never openly:
 I thought to do so once, but wav'd my purpose,
 In fear of a repulse.—Who's there?

[*a servant enters.*]

SERVANT.

Emilia

Craves hearing of your honour.

SEBASTIAN.

Lift me Albert.—

[*they whisper.*]——It is the only way.—You under-
 stand me?

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

Enough, enough.—I'll put it into practice :
When shall we meet again ?

SEBASTIAN.

At eight.

[goes

ALBERT.

Farewell.

Go, bid her in :—— [the servant retires.]

Night steals upon the world,
And her attendant, guilt, creeps from his cave,
Ranging o'er half the globe ;—bethink thee Albert,
E'er, Tarquin like, thou wound the spotless honour,
Thou canst not but adore :—weak scruples ! hence ;
Emilia is my heav'n, and I, by striving
Thus, to possess the treasure of her beauty,
Seek only how I may avoid that hell,
Join'd to the fair one's loss ;——no more,—she comes.

ALBERT. EMILIA.

EMILIA.

Honour and health attend the noble Albert.

ALBERT.

Thanks for thy wish.—Why com'st thou fair one
[hither ?

EMILIA.

To plead for my poor husband, and again
Hear Albert bid me hope.

ALBERT. *Aside.*

Why, why is this ?

Does not the lustre of her eye, convert

Darkness to light?—What kind of guilt's then
mine,

That it courts day, associates with the sun,
And, to the bright suffusion of his beams,
Turns its broad swarthy front!—Why's this, unless
I must be doubly damn'd?

EMILIA.

What says your honour?

ALBERT.

Nothing, but what already I have told you;
It is not I, Emilia;—but the laws,
That take your husband's life.

EMILIA.

Therefore I come,
Not suppliant to those laws, but to compassion;
With which, if you are fraught, well worthy are you
Of the great pow'r you hold.

ALBERT.

No more Emilia.

EMILIA.

In kneeling to you for my husband's life,
To mercy I appeal; and, trust me Albert,
Compassion is an incense that mounts higher
Than ever justice did; for when we bend
Before the throne of grace, that posture's due
To one that loves much more to spare, than punish;—
If our least sins were to draw down from heav'n
The judgment they deserve, what would become
Of you, and of us all?—Oh what indeed!

ALBERT.

ALBERT. *Aside.*

I'll speak my mind at once ;—yet how to do it ?

EMILIA.

I would you were a woman, and knew only
What sorrows I must feel.—Good, good my lord ;
Look on my tears and pity my distresses ;
See where I kneel ;—reverse the doom of death,
That's on my husband past ;—his crime is small,
And many a one there is, that lives in honour,
Deeper in guilt than he ;——then spare him, spare
him,
Though only to repent.

ALBERT.

Why do you ask
That, which I will not do ?—Nay, if I would,
What is not in my power.—Be satisfied.

EMILIA.

First be you merciful ;——and 'twere as easy,
(Much, much more so) for Albert to shew pity,
When at the law's stern frown, he might destroy,
Than for Emilia to be satisfied,
Torn from her husband's arms.

ALBERT.

No more.—I'm fix'd.

EMILIA.

Good heav'n why so ?——if you are fix'd my lord,
To take his forfeit life ; you manifest
Your person and high post affailable
By fears that have no name.—Jove's bird, that builds
Upon the cedar's top,—dreads she the wren ?

If ev'ry puny bird that beats the air,
 Could, with its little beak and feeble wing,
 Bear terror to her nest, she would not be
 The empress that she is.

ALBERT.

Have done ; have done,
 You do but pray in vain.

EMILIA.

In her last moments,
 Hark what my sister says, "For noble Albert,
 "Will I tire heaven, if he but spares a brother."
 Oh then take heed, and force her not to curse you,

ALBERT.

I am not to be mov'd.—he dies to morrow.

EMILIA. *Going.*

Then grant me patience heav'n !—long live your
 honour.

ALBERT.

Where art thou going ?

EMILIA.

First to see my husband :—
 Where next, I know not yet.

ALBERT. *Aside.*

Her tears inflame
 The heat of my desires.——What grief is this,
 That it subdues all pity in my breast,
 And stirs the sense alone !

EMILIA. *Still going.*

Long live you happy.

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

What!—not a word,—not one—to leave behind you,
For your poor husband's life?

EMILIA.

I must not hope it.

ALBERT.

Had I on this side death, a gem so dear,
As Julio is to you, when I to save him,
Came with my earnest pray'rs, denial should not
Deter me from my theme; I would pursue it,
Nor on weak words rest all my hopes of gaining
That which I begg'd,—I would *do* something
[likewise.

EMILIA.

What can I do, alas?

ALBERT.

Is it my fault,
If he should find a grave?—but you will say
I've told you, I am fix'd?—I have.—But this
B'ing cruelty in me,—you too were cruel,
Taking me at my word.

EMILIA.

Oh speak again
These accents of reproof:—they're music to me.

ALBERT.

Then, to dismiss your sorrows, know Emilia,
There is still one way left you, which pursuing;
Your husband's life is safe.—I will speak plainly,
Since I well know the great, great love you bear him,
Will,

Will, or you are not worth a thought, draw from you
 All you possess ;——No matter, what its value ;
 He is much dearer still.——What I would mean
 Is,——for I pity you,——and pity Julio,——
 Is,———[*Afide*] How to speak it ?

EMILIA.

Wherefore pauses Albert ?

ALBERT.

Emilia thou hast beauty.——To speak plainer,
 Know that I love you.

EMILIA.

Love me ?

ALBERT.

Yes Emilia,
 And in your longing arms, the forfeit Julio,
 I will replace, if you, to night, will grant
 The thing, I would not name.

EMILIA.

I have no answer.

ALBERT.

By heav'n, I swear I will ; and thus, Emilia,
 Thus, let me seal my vow.

EMILIA.

Monster avaunt !—
 Compassion now I scorn.——Mercy from thee,
 Can only prove a curse.

ALBERT.

Comes it to this ?
 Then hear me out, and if that thing—your sex
 Call modesty,—a false, tho' boasted virtue,——

Will

Will suffer you,——be wise :——either consent
To yield that treasure up, which I am set on,
Or, by my soul, he dies :——the world itself
Shall not extend his life beyond the morning,
If, with thy beauty, thou refuse to bless me :
Therefore look to't ;—go to him ;—I have sworn it.

EMILIA.

Then must he die !

ALBERT. *Returning.*

Another thing take heed of.
Possess no soul with knowledge of this secret,
As you regard your husband's life and safety,
Which yet, you may obtain :—if I once hear,
(Tho' many ways I have, to render harmless
The scandal of report) that you have broach'd
The tale of my dishonour, be assur'd,
That moment is his last ;—once more, look to it.

EMILIA. *Alone.*

Henceforward, let no truth or honour, pass
Unnotic'd of suspicion.—This vile Albert
Calls into question and deserv'd distrust,
The worth of his whole sex.—Oh Julio, Julio !
This, this was thy dear friend !——apostacy,
Back to the fiend, and boast thy triumph to him.—
Yet can it be ?——sure, I am lost in error !——
Was it *his* fault or mine ?——he could not surely
So all at once revolt, but that the sight
Of my pernicious beauty, as he call'd it,
First push'd him to th' offence.—If I thought that,
I'd on myself,—Oh vengeance !——Julio——Julio.

S C E N E

S C E N E II. A *prison.*

JULIO. FRIAR,

FRIAR.

Son, by the sacred habit of my order,
 You have had justice ; therefore, as you value
 The safety of your soul, address you quickly
 To entertain your fate.

JULIO.

My holy father,
 Is it a sin to hope ?——Why will you urge
 That fearful thing, call'd death, so often to me ?

FRIAR.

To arm you for the worst ; so, fearing death,
 Shall unexpected life, with greater comfort,
 Greet your sad bosom ; or to-morrow's sentence,
 Not yet repeal'd, be robb'd of half its terrors ;
 Since, if the counsel of my love, you follow,
 Conscience, with all the keenness of upbraiding,
 In your last moments shall not find occasion
 Thus to exclaim “ Now see what desperation
 “ Waits on security.”——be wise and shun it.

JULIO. FRIAR. EMILIA.

JULIO.

I will not think of it.——my wife !

EMILIA.

Oh Julio !

JULIO.

JULIO.

What is the news?—what comfort dost thou
bring me?

EMILIA.

Oh! I shall go distracted with my sorrows!

JULIO.

What means this wild disorder?—why Emilia,
Twine thy fond arms about me? why this terror
In thy affrighted looks?

EMILIA.

I cannot speak.

JULIO.

Tell me at once, is there no comfort for me?

EMILIA.

Cruel reply, which yet, I must deliver.

JULIO.

Does Albert then forget?

EMILIA.

Name not the villain.

FRIAR.

Daughter be pacified.—Your sorrow makes you,
Utter you know not what.

EMILIA.

Away with counsel;

Hell has no flame whose fury equals that
Which rages in my breast.—

JULIO.

Still, still what mean you?

Speak not in riddles thus, for I am arm'd
To undergo the worst.—Suspence is torture.—

What

What, will you whisper me?—A moment, please you
 Good father, to retire;—I'll speak a word,
 In private to my wife, and soon will haste
 To have your ghostly comfort and instruction.

FRIAR.

I shall attend you in the anti-chamber.

JULIO. EMILIA.

JULIO.

There look, to see me straight:—and now Emilia,
 What from my friend? When last I spoke his name,
 I think thou call'dst him villain:—if he merits
 Th' addition which thou gav'st him,—heav'n have
 mercy

Upon the best of us:—What may I hope?

EMILIA.

Think not of hope:—you breathe your last to—
 [morrow;
 Therefore prepare.

JULIO.

Oh let me ever fold thee
 In my expiring arms: (thou'rt all in all
 The treasure of my soul.—one friend I had,
 Who Judas like, deceives, forsakes, betrays me,
 And only thou art left—then tell me,—can I
 Oh! can I part with thee?

EMILIA.

Thou must—and quickly.

JULIO.

To-morrow said'st thou not?

EMILIA.

EMILIA.

To-morrow Julio;

Yet——

JULIO.

Yet?——What yet?——That word

[brings sudden comfort

To my sad heart.——light, to the blind man, comes

Less welcome than that *yet*.——tell, tell me quickly,

Is there a glimpse of hope that I may live?

EMILIA.

Yes, thou *may'st* live;—but oh!—the hard, hard
ransom!

JULIO.

Why am I held in doubt?—What is the purchase?

EMILIA.

Wouldst thou believe it!

JULIO.

Still I'm on the rack——

EMILIA.

Th' infringement of that vow, which, when we

[married,

Bound me for ever yours!

JULIO.

He could not ask it!

What!—from the seat of justice!—no—he could not,

(Thou hast mistaken quite)—he could not fall

Into such horrid guilt.——The loyalty

Which to my bed you owe!—it is impossible.

EMILIA.

Oh that it were not true——

JULIO.

JULIO.

The noble Albert!—
Then virtue's self is false and none are honest:
It is resolv'd—I'll die—

EMILIA.

And canst thou leave me?

JULIO.

If I could not, wouldst thou consent to save me?

EMILIA.

Oh no, no, no;—and yet—fearful conceit!—
'Tis terrible to die.

JULIO.

Do not appal me
On the pit's brink, with these imaginations.

EMILIA.

To part with thee!—

JULIO.

Ah—death and parting, saidst

EMILIA.

[thou!

Horrible both!

JULIO.

True—true—to die, means some-
[thing

Which the soul shudders at, and the firm bosom,
(Firm in all dangers else) recoils to think of.

And then to part!—terrible word Emilia!

Is there beyond the grave, a hell of horror

Equal to that?—Oh my good angel save me;—

Save me;—for soon the fearful gulph will open,

Dooming my soul to everlasting terrors.

JULIO.

SEBASTIAN.

Your pardon for this sudden interruption:
 Something I bring of moment from lord Albert
 Which will rejoice you both——'tis to Emilia——
 Read and be happy.——What is't moves you
 lady?

SEBASTIAN.

Once in my life. [*takes up and pretends to read
the paper.*]

The tyrant,—(swift destruction—
Oh I could curse, if heav'n would hear my curses.)
Commands me by that paper to be speedy
In my resolve, or at the hour of midnight
Shalt thou be dragg'd to death.

Remorfelefs villain!

C

SEBASTIAN.

SEBASTIAN.

Hear me wrong'd lady. I disclaim all knowledge
 Of this vile paper; my unhappy stars
 Have planted me near Albert,——whom I now
 Have equal cause with you, to call a villain——
 His servant, not his friend:——had I but known
 The meaning of this note, which I conceiv'd
 To be another respite, these my arms
 Should have first rotted off, e'er they had thus
 Insulted your distress.

EMILIA.

It may be so.

SEBASTIAN.

If you distrust, me still——I bind myself
 By any honest method, to revenge
 Your wrongs upon his head, and nothing else
 Ask in return, but that which I may merit;
 Thanks of you both, for your own safety will
 Your secrecy insure.

EMILIA.

There is no way,

I fear, to our redress.

SEBASTIAN.

Know *you* of any?

JULIO.

Did but the duke——

SEBASTIAN.

Nay, nay, you must not think
 One moment of the duke.——You have no witnesses?
 Nothing but this? which may not be his writing.——
 Where's

Where's then your cause?——you must seek out,—
believe me,

Some better course than this, or bid at once
Good night to your revenge;—besides, lord Albert,
High as the duke has plac'd him, would gain credit
Saying it is not so.——tell me but this:—
If he should urge your letter has been forg'd,
How would you prove it his?

JULIO *embracing* Emilia.

Oh how indeed.

SEBASTIAN.

This is improper now. [*pausing.*] ——I have a
thought

Just come across my brain.——Let me intreat you
Leave us alone awhile;——ask me not why,
Left you spoil all.——I have no honesty,
Unless I serve you here.——go in——delay not.

JULIO.

Her honour being unblemish'd, you shall find me
Willing to live.

EMILIA. SEBASTIAN.

SEBASTIAN.

He loves you much, and therefore,
Tell me——it is a question of much import——
Were it a sin, on any terms to save him?

EMILIA.

What may'st thou mean by that?

SEBASTIAN.

That Heav'n—Emilia—
Must be too good, with punishment to follow
So merciful a sin—if sin, you think it,
Saving a husband's life.

EMILIA.

I would die for him.—
But wherefore kill my soul?

SEBASTIAN.

You would not kill it;
Being, as you are, compell'd to the transgression.

EMILIA.

Hence from my bosom ye unhallow'd thoughts,
That to temptation lead.—A life preserv'd,
And lengthen'd by my shame, were hateful to him.
Had he desir'd to live, why did he not
Persuade me to the deed?

SEBASTIAN.

You judge not well——
There is no man that holds so light his honour
As to do that; though where's the wretch now
living,

Who would not thank his being's kind preserver
Taking the gift with joyfulness, if purchas'd
Tho' on hard terms—yet such, as to his knowledge
Never could come?—do but suppose that Julio
Were in *your* place, and you bless'd with a consort
Loving and lov'd.—would you not take with joy
The life she might preserve, by that—— (a slip

Call

Call it at worst)——which to persuade her to,
Yourself breath'd not a word?

EMILIA.

My husband sir,

As all who have that name should be,—heav'n made
Protector of my honour;——and if he
Give up his life by choice, my duty says,
On terms of shame, I ought not to preserve it.

SEBASTIAN.

This argues virtue in you, but such virtue
As carries you too far——how, if he found,
That to redeem his life, you 'ad cast away
A jewel beyond price; than which, friends, riches,
Health, country, wealth and pleasure are not dearer.
Would not he stand, by all the laws of nature,
Bound to your love?—alas! it is in friendship
That I proceed thus far.——I would not have
Two creatures cast away.

EMILIA.

Tempt me no more,

SEBASTIAN.

I tempt you for your good:—besides, think lady,
Your husband—for his soul—so much he loves you,
Could not reveal his wish.—he could not say
“Lose something for my gain”——Oh will you then
Come short of him in love?——have pity on him;
Left, in the pangs of an untimely death,
His discontented soul complain, that Albert
Was more inclin'd to save him than Emilia.

C 3

EMILIA.

EMILIA.

To err upon compulsion, and offend
Of our own will, are crimes—but yet, I hope,
Crimes of no kin.

SEBASTIAN.

I'm glad to see you coming :—
What you shall do, to save your husband's life,
Weigh'd with all crimes, of ev'ry other nature,
Loses the name of sin.

EMILIA.

If it were so——

SEBASTIAN.

Then too revenge ?——if he must die, Emilia,
Where wilt thou gain redress ?——shall Albert triumph
Unpunish'd, in this act ?——nay more :——what virtue
Shall screen thee from his power ?——who knows,
——what arts,

The villain may employ !——what mighty engines
Put into use,——if, bent upon enjoyment,
Thy beauty urge him on.——Think then, Emilia,
Should it be so——as thou must fall before 'em,
Thy virtue's lost in vain.

EMILIA.

Thou hast wak'd my fears——
I see the danger now ;——final destruction
Fall on his head ;——I am, at last, persuaded.

SEBASTIAN.

This now, is as it should be ; and I'm happy—
All shall go well ;——I will call in your husband——

But

But madam—to conceal your resolution,—
Say as I say.

EMILIA.

I shall obey your counsel.

SEBASTIAN.

Julio;—my friend;—come in, thou man of sorrow.

EMILIA. SEBASTIAN. JULIO.

SEBASTIAN.

Bid farewell to your wife.——An hour e'er midnight
Wait our return, and with us too, your pardon,
If from Lord Albert, upon terms of honour,
That pardon may be had:——I have a mind
That's flatter'd with strong hope;—but if we fail—
(I think we cannot fail)——the time will then
Be soon enough to part.

EMILIA.

Till then, my Julio,
Heav'n be thy stay and rest thou satisfied
To save thy life,—(howe'er 'tis precious to me)—
Thy bed shall not be wrong'd.

JULIO.

Farewell—farewell.—
Swift move ye moments, till we meet again,

SCENE III. *The house of Albert.*

ALBERT.

There was a time once, when a woman's tears
Would have subdu'd my nature to lament
Upon the piteous cause.——Why am I then

So in a moment chang'd?—can the fall'n angel
 Mate with a cherub?—who denies it,—let him
 Look but on me, who, from another's goodness,
 Lost to all good myself, can glean no maxim
 Save that the thing I covet in her beauty,
 Sets more my sense in flame; for oh,—Emilia,—
 Let the winds hear it not, but 'tis thy virtue,
 Heightens the charms, which make my longing soul
 Sick for enjoyment: had the fiend, who lays
 Temptation in my path, perverted first
 Thy footstep from the way of female virtue,
 Thou wert not worth pursuit.—here comes my
 villain.

ALBERT. SEBASTIAN.

ALBERT.

My oracle what hope can'st thou vouchsafe me?
 Hast thou succeeded?

SEBASTIAN.

Look sir, and be certain.

ALBERT. *Looking out.*

This is success indeed!——I will not lose
 A moment of my bliss.——meantime Sebastian,
 Go to the prison you, and free the husband.

SEBASTIAN.

Be not so hasty sir.——Your passion blinds you.
 Prudence forbid that step!

ALBERT.

Why—what's the matter?

SEBASTIAN.

You know not what you say.—enlarge the husband!
 Are you well sir?

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

I am aware you'll tell me
We have not his consent ;——but let that be——
It will be better so.

SEBASTIAN.

'Twill *not* be better.——
My lord, I must be bold.——shall Julio live
To 'venge the wrong you put upon Emilia,
Knowing her shame?—off with his head e'er morning
Nor let him live to hear the tale recounted
Of the past night, that stamps disgrace upon him.

ALBERT.

But then my word ?———if Julio dies, I break it;
I'm by my promise bound.

SEBASTIAN.

My lord believe me,
Here lies your choice——either suppress your flame
Or so dispose of Julio, that his vengeance
May never dog your steps.——Give me your ring ;
I'll bear it to the goal, and be myself,
The harbinger of his fate :——within this hour
Expect me on the rear of your delight,
With news of Julio's death.

ALBERT.

When it is known,
'Twill drive Emilia mad.

SEBASTIAN.

What's that you ?——
I cannot hide my warmth, to mark your passion;
How, like a frozen stream, it is bound up

With

With foolish doubts and fears.—grant she go mad—
As there's great hope she will :——what cause have
you

To be in pain for that ?——when you have tasted
What your soul longs for, let her rot or perish
By any fearful way :———you've gain'd your end,
And have no more to wish.

ALBERT.

I mean Sebastian——

SEBASTIAN.

Come——come no more.———either you love her not
Or fearing to do that, which may secure you,
Merit her not.———In me, love's lamp hath nearly
Burnt to the snuff,———yet as I am———
believe me,

Drawn by a thread so strong—I could do wonders
To compass my desires.

ALBERT.

I cannot think

'Twere good to deal in blood.

SEBASTIAN.

You're young, and danger
Should prompt to the deed——so the achieve-
[ment,
Dowr'd with the hazard, brings the more of rapture,
Which, if with ease obtain'd, were like a bauble,
Always in reach, and courting your acceptance,
Valued at nought.

ALBERT.

What of the duke?

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

To him

Grant she complain;———is there no way;—no
method;

Just or unjust, to undermine her falsehood,
Making it seem so?

ALBERT.

We will think upon it.——

Hold:——take my seal:——dispatch:——and tell
the provost,

That on the sight of it, Emilia's husband
Be born to instant death.——To death!——what
said I?

Is it my friend;——the husband of Emilia,
Whom I thus doom——

SEBASTIAN.

My lord——

ALBERT.

But I'm determin'd.——

Necessity and choice both spur me on
To the full harvest where my joys are blowing:
Take then the token straight—and stay Sebastian:—
The man provided for, our cares must turn
Upon the woman next.

SEBASTIAN.

Leave that to me——

ALBERT.

E'er midnight you'll return?

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Expect to see me

Near on that hour.

SEBASTIAN. *Alone.*

Now I'm alone, and fit
 For thought and meditation.——When I first
 Embark'd on this design, the profit of it
 Made me begin; not dreaming that the virtue
 Of a weak woman, which I've now experienc'd,
 (Thinking with ease, she'd swallow the temptation
 To a sweet sin,) would make this after action
 Spring from necessity.——'twas that deceiv'd me:
 Yet am I in, and what must not now be practis'd,
 Pleads self defence, or else discov'ry follows
 Close on the heel.——That's comfort for the con-
[science :
 But I delay too long——what Julio stays for.

A C T

A C T II.

S C E N E I. *The Country, with a
distant view of the City of Padua.*

*The DUKE as entering to a Tent, followed by his
ATTENDANTS.*

DUKE.

THIS is a pleasant spot :—here will we rest ;
And, look you my good lords, to-morrow's
fun

No earlier shall be up, but we will out
And hie us to the chace.—How says the map ?
What is the distance from our court to this ?

ATTENDANT.

Full three and twenty miles ; and yonder spires,
Whit'ning beneath the moon,—as I conceive it—
Rise within Padua's walls.——To Venice thence,
In the way hither are ten leagues exact.

DUKE.

'Tis a fine night !———what dismal sound was
that !

ATTENDANT.

That, my good lord !———

DUKE.

Hark———now it strikes again.

ATTEND.

ATTENDANT.

Nothing my lord ; but that to night, at Padua,
 One of the wealthiest burghers dies for treason.
 Just now return'd from thence, my servant Louis,
 Whom I sent thither, to procure subsistence
 While we stay here, reports that the commandant
 Fearing a rescue,——e'er he left the city,——
 Order'd thus late at night his execution.

DUKE.

When set your servant out ?

ATTENDANT.

At eight——and scarcely
 Is the hour wasted, since he quitted Padua.——
 Why looks your grace thus sad ?

DUKE.

That man you speak of
 Was my dear friend.—From Albert, have his treasons
 Come to my ear ; and though I knew already
 How his life stood, a forfeiture to justice ;
 Yet did I think his death more distant from him
 Than it now proves ; for our commandant often,
 Loving the man, hath still delay'd his sentence ;
 Which he would now, but that for reasons——doubt-
 [less,
 Full of much import,—he withholds the mercy ;
 Therefore it was, the tidings damp'd my spirits.

ATTENDANT.

Something of this, your grace hath talk'd already.

DUKE.

DUKE.

He hath a lady too ;—a kind and fair one ;—
Whose goodness I may dwell on, tho' I never
Can speak of it enough——I knew she lov'd him,
And, in his death, will suffer much affliction.——
Would for her sake, that I had staid his sentence.

ATTENDANT.

This weighs too much upon you.

DUKE.

I'll write to her,
And, in some sort to mitigate her sorrows,
Tender the comforts which my court may give her ;
Friends and society ; and this, I may do,
Since I have known her long :——it was myself,
That help'd her to her husband.——For this present,
To ev'ry one good night.—Rest may wear off
My heaviness of heart.

ATTENDANT.

Else 'twere a pity,
Coming thus far, to have the country's pleasures.

DUKE.

Three days we'll here encamp, and then steal home
As private as we came ; nor, shall our nobles,
Know we've been absent———once again, good
ev'ning——

I will to rest.——Appoint some guard till morning,
For you well know, what thieves infest the forest.

ATTENDANT.

Doubt not our care my lord, we will be watchful.

S C E N E

S C E N E II. The *street*.

JULIO. FRIAR. PROVOST. OFFICERS. *In
procession to execution :—behind them* SEBASTIAN
with SPECTATORS.

PROVOST.

Room for the pris'ner there.

JULIO.

Good father, hear me.

FRIAR.

Patience my son ;—speak not, for you must die.

JULIO.

Heav'ns you are just !—if thus *my* sins you visit,
Shall Albert 'scape your wrath ?

SPECTATOR *to* Sebastian.

How's that ?—what says he ?

SEBASTIAN.

Marry fir this :———he hath of late, in prison;
Which, to deal charitably with th' offender,
I must believe the consequence of madness;
Glanc'd at the governor, accus'd his honour
Of tamp'ring with the virtue of his wife
And the delirious fit, still strong within him,
He's railing at him now.

SPECTATOR.

Why should he so ?

JULIO.

JULIO.

How dreadfully that bell tolls!—hear me
heav'n;

Sleep not upon my wrongs; but of your vengeance
Let Albert bear his part.—Upon my knees,
I make it my last pray'r,

FRIAR.

Prophane and impious!

PROVOST.

Be not offended.—If 'tis madness in him
As I believe no less,—your pious censures
Fall useless to the ground.

FRIAR.

I'm sorry for him.

PROVOST.

Headsmen, a word with you.

SEBASTIAN *to the Spectators.*

A likely story!—

Who will believe it?—has the brave commandant,
No more deserv'd, than to be thus ill treated
By an assassin's tongue, who, suff'ring justly,
Speaks what he lists.

SPECTATOR.

If he be mad, the fault
Pardons itself.—Will you walk on, or tarry
Here in the press?

SEBASTIAN.

A moment, and I'm with you.

D

JULIO.

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I'm sorry for him.

PROVOST.

Headsmen, a word with you.

SEBASTIAN *to the Spectators.*

A likely story! ———

Who will believe it? ——— has the brave commandant,
No more deserv'd, than to be thus ill treated
By an assassin's tongue, who, suff'ring justly,
Speaks what he lists.

SPECTATOR.

If he be mad, the fault
Pardons itself. ——— Will you walk on, or tarry
Here in the press?

SEBASTIAN.

A moment, and I'm with you.

D

JULIO.

JULIO.

Is there no friend?—no pity?—no compassion?
But you must all become my sworn destroyers!—
Wretched Emilia!—little art thou conscious
Of this unhappy hour!—how wilt thou weep,
Root up thy hair and smite upon thy bosom;
At thy return from Albert's loath'd embraces,
Seeing me dead!—stretch'd out a corpse before
thee——

Senseless and cold!—heav'n!—what a wretch
is Julio!

If, as too much I fear, by love directed,
Thou hast lost that, which worlds could not have
purchas'd!——

Horrible thought!——off off ye hind'ring fetters,
That I may tear these limbs with very anguish;
And to my heart dig deep a spacious passage,
That like a pris'ner, bound in a dark dung'on,
Pants to be free.

FRIAR.

Author of mercies, quickly
Visit this wretch with comfort, and apply
Peace to his heart.

JULIO.

Weep to behold me said I?——
Never——oh no——in bitterness of sorrow,
Will she not rather (whilst her sharp upbraidings
Reach ev'n my grave, and make that bed uneasy)
Say this is he——the cause——th' accursed cause

Of

Of his wife's shame?—what comfort will it bring
her

That my consent was wanting to her ruin?
Still I have been the cause.—To share my fortune,
Her kindred and her country she forsook
Marrying me here.—This curse had never happen'd
Being no wife of mine.—Will no one loose me?
That with these desp'rate hands I may invade
The region of my heart—and the poor martyr
Pluck out at once—for now, I die by inches.

FRIAR.

Oh wretched period!—gracious heav'n restore him.

JULIO.

Peace—father peace.—I am not mad tho' miserable.
—Would—would I were.

SEBASTIAN *to the Spectators.*

What Sirs, now judge you of him?

FRIAR.

The time of death draws nigh; think how to meet it.

JULIO.

Where is my wife?

PROVOST.

I'm sorry,—but Emilia.

Is no where to be found.

JULIO.

From Albert fetch her—

His purpose is fulfill'd and I must see her.

PROVOST.

She went not back to Albert from the prison.

D 2

JULIO.

JULIO.

Provost she did———you are all leagu'd against
me———

She's with him now———good Gods what could
induce me

To part with her!———I was deluded—forc'd
Into the fatal step, by one whom Albert
Sent to deceive me.———Curses on my folly!——
How could I let her go!———Oh I could strip
This cov'ring from my bones!———drag Albert
hither;—

Bring too his vile associate and I'll dash them,
Both on the earth, as Hercules did Lichas;
Where, to a rock transform'd;—with mad'ning
fury,
Beating my head against their flinty bosoms,
Will I at once find death.

PROVOST.

Force him away.

JULIO.

Where is my wife?———this instant bring her to
me———

See her I will;—I must;—or, by the hopes
I entertain of bliss, I will not die
Unless you kill me here.

FRIAR.

Have patience.

JULIO.

Patience!

Hence with the word—I must and will behold her—
If

If you deny me, I will do ~~you wrong~~ I know not
How far my rage and my despair may drive me—
But I'll have vengeance———bring her therefore
to me,

Or, by my soul's salvation, I will rather
Suffer wild horses, to disjoint and tear me,
Than kneel down to the block.

PROVOST.

You must—you must.

FRIAR.

Son—as a father, to his child, just plunging
Into a pit, would run and snatch him from it—
So let me thee:—This guilty raving silence,
And upon heav'n call instantly for pardon.

JULIO.

Shall I not barely see her?

FRIAR.

Never—therefore
Arm you for death; and, wishing to find mercy
In your last moments, censure not lord Albert,
Who is too good, to fall into damnation
By such a horrid course.

JULIO.

Oh father, father!

Pity the woes I feel—and thou Emilia,
Lay not to my account thy loss of honour;—
Lost for my sake———might but my death re-
deem it;

This head, I would lay down, as, on his pillow,
Sinks the tir'd traveller, when his bed receives him;

And, with th' impatience of a bridegroom's passion,
Chide the flow hour, and think death long ap-
proaching.

PROVOST.

On there.

JULIO.

One moment more, and I obey you :
Provost—when I am dead—give thou this ring
To my unhappy wife——say when I sent it
I was just going to make full atonement
For the deep wrong, which—but for me, had never
Fall'n on her spotless name—tell her, these eyes—
Which—were she here——she would behold now
rivetted
Fast to the earth—have shut bright daylight out,
And clos'd their selves in death.

PROVOST.

This shall she know.——

[*Aside to the Friar.*] Bear with me fir——I soothe
him in his frenzy,
To a good end.

JULIO.

From Padua too;—this city——
Where,—as contracted in a narr'wer circle—
Springs every vice, that grows in ev'ry climate——
Bid her be gone; nor vainly hope for justice
In a corrupted age——where——long as heav'n
Bids not earth open, to receive the guilty;
Nor, from his throne, consuming fire come down,
Whole

Whole nations to consume——the lawless ruffian
 Must triumph in his crimes.——Charge her to fly
 The public haunts of men;——devote her soul
 To heav'n and pray'r in silence and retirement.——
 Bid to all past delights, a long farewell;
 And cease to mingle, with a laughing world,
 That scoff and jeer at virtue in misfortunes.

PROVOST.

This will I do most faithfully.

JULIO.

Then all
 I can perform, I have——lead on.——Emilia
 Must I ne'er see thee more?——to view thy face
 And take a last farewell, had sweeten'd death——
 That would not have been much——oh me!—my
 heart!—
 My breaking heart!—bear yet a little more——
 Then cease thy anguish, and for ever rest.

S C E N E III. The prison.

EMILIA.

I have no business—guilty as I am—
 To thrust myself into conviction's path,
 And give each stone a tongue that may proclaim
 How greatly I have sinn'd——alas!—alas!—
 There is no need of evidence without
 Whilst conscience lives within——yet, have I
 sav'd

D 4

My

My dear, dear Julio's life :—upon my knees,
 To heav'n I bend for that—nor will I murmur
 At the just punishment myself must suffer,
 Since—to the man whom my soul loves—I'm made
 The instrument of good.—What sacred horror
 Comes in that sound!—some poor afflicted
 spirit,

Quitting it's clay, has from a bed of sickness,
 Wing'd it's flight hence.—With what a purchase,
 Julio,

Have I averted thine!—all silent—sleep
 Has surely stole upon him!—oh!—when next,
 I woo thee to my lids—who is't approaches?

The grave shall be my bed—the turf my pillow :
 There will be rest indeed!

EMILIA. PROVOST.

EMILIA.

No noise—he's sleeping.

When did you leave him?

PROVOST.

Julio, mean you madam?

EMILIA.

Whom should I mean besides?—my husband—
 provost—

Why do you look amaz'd?—is't not a question?—
 When did you leave him?—speak.

PROVOST.

Alas Emilia!

He is no more.

EMILIA.

EMILIA.

No more!—what mean you provost?—

PROVOST.

Sorry I am, to bring you these ill tidings

Which, from my soul I swear, would give me
pleasureWere they not true.———But—to confirm them
fully——

Look on this ring.

EMILIA.

That ring!———let me behold it——

Merciful heav'n!———this ring was his—I know it——

Yet—what of that?—let me be more persuaded.

[She departs hastily.]

PROVOST.

I am amaz'd——her griefs are strong and many—
Something she means, which must be straight pre-
[vented.EMILIA. *Returning.*He's gone indeed; but, whither have they born
him?

Nay——hide it not.

PROVOST.

Why this to me Emilia?

I'm guiltless of his death.

EMILIA.

He is not dead———

You do not use me well, to join with those

That laugh at my distress———how should he
die?

PROVOST.

PROVOST.

I pity you indeed——because I fear,
 You have been much abus'd; but, Madam ——
 trust me,—

I should esteem it sin, by coining falsehoods,
 To trifle with your pain :—the curfew ringing,
 By Albert's special order, he was led
 To execution.——Dying,—he pronounc'd
 Most tenderly your name, and the last word
 He falter'd, was Emilia.

EMILIA.

Heav'n support me!
 The tale, this man relates, has poison in it
 And I am sick to death——why let it come,
 I have deserv'd to die.——Some horrid end,
 Some kind of death that has no precedent
 Mark'd on the list of murder, should my hand
 Inflict upon my crimes——flight punishment!
 Unequal to the guilt.

PROVOST.

Retire within.

EMILIA. *After a pause.*

I like that justice well——I have a sword,
 Which yet, I did not mean to use so early :
 But, since it must be so [*feeling in her bosom*]——oh
 here it is——

Come forth and be discharg'd.

PROVOST.

Upon my knee——

EMILIA.

EMILIA. *Ravingly.*

Nay 'tis too late——remember, once I knelt
 But found no mercy——tyrant!—now will I
 Be cruel in my turn——where is my husband?—
 Hark ruffian——I will make the name of Albert
 Dreadful to future treach'ry!——ev'ry villain,
 Thinking on thee——come forth——come forth
 [drawing out her dagger.]—shall quake
 As at the doom's day bar.

PROVOST. *Wrenching away the dagger.*

Defend me heav'n!——
 Give me the sword——what desp'rate deed,—rash
 woman,
 You nearly had perform'd!

EMILIA.

I am to blame——
 I see it though too late.

PROVOST.

If you have lost
 The thing you held most dear—I took it not—
 He fell by course of law and 'tis unjust
 To wreck your griefs on me.

EMILIA.

Oh grant me pardon——
 My loss hath made me mad——I took you fir,
 For him that hath deluded me, beyond
 Th' example of all villains——give me back
 That instrument you have:——upon my knee
 I beg it of you.

PROVOST.

PROVOST.

To what purpose, madam?

SEBASTIAN. *Within.*

Ho——in the prison here——where is the provost?

PROVOST.

I hear one calling me.——Go in Emilia——

Let me intreat you, do: within——who's waiting?---

[*to a servant who comes in.*] Conduct this
gentlewoman to my sister——

Let her want nothing.——Stay not; but away---

You shall be look'd to well.

PROVOST. *Alone.*

Now by my life

This is most strange!——what it can mean,

I know not——

Time will unravel all.

PROVOST. SEBASTIAN.

SEBASTIAN.

From Albert sir,

This letter is address'd.

PROVOST.

I know the writing well.

[*He reads.*] “Our pleasure is, that Emilia, who
“ stands charg'd with plotting our death, be
“ detained in proper custody; whereof fail
“ not, as you will answer the contrary at
“ your peril.”

“ALBERT.”

PROVOST.

PROVOST.

I shall obey——the pris'ner is within ;
As I must call her now——would you believe
it?——

This dagger I wrench'd from her, or she had
Done something bloody on me.

SEBASTIAN.

Heav'n forbid it!—

[*aside*] I have a use for this.

PROVOST.

Go in with me :

You shall hear more, anon.

SEBASTIAN.

I am griev'd for her.

'Tis a dark world ,we live in.——God forgive her—
I could not have believ'd it.

PROVOST.

Let's go in——

Her spirits are quite spent :——she lacks both help,
And necessary rest.

SEBASTIAN.

I could weep for her——

She has deceiv'd me much :—pray God forgive her.
Go in before——I will be with you shortly.

SEBASTIAN. *Alone.*

My lord—my lord—come in—Sebastian calls you.

SEBASTIAN. ALBERT.

SEBASTIAN.

Fear nothing for not Argus, through this habit,
Could guess at what you are.

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

That's well——where was't
We broke off our discourse?——I recollect——
At “mingling with the throng”——’twas there
you finish’d.

SEBASTIAN.

I mingled with the throng, and as he pass’d
To’ards execution, spoke to those about me;
And, with a pitying shrug, in whispers told them,
The criminal was mad:——there needed nothing
To make my words seem true, but taking notice
Of the wild speeches; incoherent taunts;
And bitter accusations, he threw out
Against your noble self; which, I requested,
They would, in careful opposition place,
To the unblemish’d carriage of your life;
And then decide themselves.

ALBERT.

And so he suffer’d?

SEBASTIAN.

What mean you by that question?——as I live;
You seem to me to shake!

ALBERT.

Cruel Sebastian,

You have undone me!

SEBASTIAN.

How?——undone you Albert?

ALBERT.

Robb’d me of peace—destroy’d my soul for ever.—
Tempted my hand to do a deed of horror,

Which,

Which, but to think on now; the door of madness
Sits in my view, as op'ning to receive me.

SEBASTIAN.

What do I hear?

ALBERT.

Because, to thy direction
Fool as I was,—I yielded up my reason;
Thou hast the weakness of my heart persuaded——
(And could I yield, just heav'n!)——to do——oh
what?——

To murder my dear friend!

SEBASTIAN.

My lord, these wav'rings
But ill become a man——if you repent
Of what's already done; and therefore, suffer
Foolish compunction to possess your bosom,
I prophesy you're lost; for there's much more
That must be yet perform'd.

ALBERT.

I'll do *no* more:
I have already dipp'd these hands in blood,
Which not whole years of penitential deeds,
Shall ever wash away.——Iscaiot like,
On thy fell counsel, have I took the breath
Of him, who would have lost it, to redeem
The life of his false friend:——and do'st thou come
To load me with more guilt?——hadst thou
been he,

(Of whom thou'rt little short) who, lion like,
Ranges the wide world through, in quest of souls

To

To people his dark realms——thou wouldst have
thought

I'ad sinn'd enough, to make perdition firm
And tempted me no more.

SEBASTIAN.

Hear me, my lord——

ALBERT.

Thou 'ast talk'd too much——be henceforth, dumb
for ever;

Unless thou can'st instruct me, to do that,
Which may atone the past:——look round about;
Thou see'st me on all sides hemm'd in by blood——
The blood of a dear friend:——if I should plunge
By such another deed, into the stream
Farther than this——the hand of heav'n itself
Could never pluck me out.

SEBASTIAN.

Prepost'rous whining!

Unworthy ev'n of women!——for Emilia,
When she consented, for her husband's life,
To prostitution's terms,——terms which yourself
Had courage to make void,——threw conscience
by;

And, till the deed was done, consulted not
Its censure or applause.——You should be more
In heart as well as name;——but you are less
Than a weak woman is.——Behold this dagger
——Nay start not at the sight.

ALBERT.

This dagger?

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Put

By accident most strange, into our hands;
An instrument of good.—dare you employ it?

ALBERT.

Employ it?—Upon whom?

SEBASTIAN.

Are you so fast

Lull'd on the bed of safety, when the winds
Of danger rock your cradle, as to ask
On whom it should be us'd?—If I must speak;—
Upon Emilia then.

ALBERT.

Perish this arm,

E'er such another murder as the past,
Employ my trembling hand.

SEBASTIAN.

Degen'rate man!

Was it in mock'ry then, that you dispatch'd
Your warrant with me here?

ALBERT.

I was then steel'd

Against the nat'ral feelings of a man,
And knew not what I did.—My heart is now,
Subdu'd to pity her, and I repent
Of all that I have done.

SEBASTIAN.

If now you faint,

Irresolute and weak;—to what intent,
Have you perform'd the past?—How did you dare

E

To

To take the husband's life, but that the thought,
Of what you meant to practise on the wife,
Forewarn'd you to prevent?

ALBERT.

No more.

SEBASTIAN.

And now,

The danger still as great, you are content
To let discov'ry come;—turn not away.—
Losing the boldness that becomes a man
To cry “I do repent.”

ALBERT.

Bold fronted wretch!

Rous'd from my lethargy too late,—I blush,
That I have link'd my fortunes to a man,
That hath no more about him, than the shape
And figure of his kind.—Hence:—take thy gift,
Thy instrument of good.—Henceforth I'll hate
Thee and the fiend alike.

SEBASTIAN.

You rant this well,

And now in turn hear me:—Know therefore fir,
As what's already done, heaps certain danger
On both of us at once;—to save myself,
I'll post me to the duke.

ALBERT.

I am undone!

SEBASTIAN.

SEBASTIAN.

You us'd me, when th' expected pleasure made
My counsel worth pursuit;—and do you now,
When, at my risque, you have fulfill'd your wishes,
Tell me your conscience yields to fears and scruples?
What's that to me?—But know, ungen'rous Albert,
I will not, the discov'ry of your passion,
Wait for, before I know, what will become
Of you and of myself.—I will be wife:—
Prevent it and confess:—I must.—Farewell.

ALBERT.

Give me a moment's thought.—I've gone too far,
With safety to retreat.—What must I do?

SEBASTIAN.

Nothing, my lord.—I want but your consent,
And word she shall not live.—Raise not a doubt
Upon the consequence.—I have a way
To make you easy there.—Are you agreed?

ALBERT.

Must I then murder her?

SEBASTIAN.

Have you gain'd that
Which was to her so dear;—and do you now,
Demur to seize on what, ev'n she, herself,
Must as a curse regard?

ALBERT.

Ha!—let me think.—
Strong argument indeed!—her honesty,
Like an unworthy trifle, have I spoil'd,
And Julio sent to rest,—and do I fear—

(Fool like and coward both!) to touch her life,
Which, by the stings of guilt and conscience goaded,
Sits, like the shirt of Hercules upon her,——
Tort'ring whilst worn.——Pardon my haste
Sebastian.——

Till now, I did not see our common safety,
Connected as it is.——You have convinc'd me;
It is necessity and not choice, demands
Her instant cutting off.——She's dead.——
I've said it——

This morning is her last.——Go to my house,
And there digest the plot.——Waste not the time;—
By now I think 'tis one.——I will come to you.

SEBASTIAN.

You must, and quickly too.

ALBERT. *Alone.*

A bloody minded
Base, and dark dealing slave!—a ruffian!—one
That hath a brain to fancy, and a hand
To do the deadliest sin!—who for reward,
Would his own brother stab; and, after that,
To take all witnesses off, and sleep in peace,
His prompter to the act:——when there's no need
Of that he tenders now, could he but guess
What kind of love I bear him; he—I'm sure,—
Would look well to his self.—I must do something.

A C T

A C T III.

S C E N E I. *The house of Albert.*

ALBERT. SERVANT.

[*the clock strikes two.*]

ALBERT.

S E T down the light.—'Tis well.—Hence
to your chamber.—
When did the clock strike last?

SERVANT.

My lord, this moment.

ALBERT.

Leave me.—[*the servant retires*] I heard it not.—

My thoughts were turn'd
The way of blood, too much :—ev'ry slight noise,
Shap'd by the present horrors ;—to my ear,
Comes as a dying groan ;—for murder now,
Cloath'd like a human form, besmears the floor
With unoffending blood.—When it is done,
He tells me we are safe.—'Tis false !——
for ne'er

The murd'rer can be safe, unless he could
Stifle the voice of blood, which,—from the times
Of the first Cain, till yesterday,—hath cried
Most audibly to heav'n.—What if I send,
And stop the cruel deed ?——but Julio,—him,

Alas I have dispatch'd!—there ground my hopes.—
 Can I the dead awake, or to the grave,
 Bid the life breath come back?—Hark;—
 how replies

The tempter to that question!—never Albert,—
 Let her then die,—She must.—I am resolv'd.—
 Her murder, is the consequence of that,
 Which is already done.—No more of thought:—
 To drown thee I'll abroad,—for yet 'tis night;—
 And, with the spirits of the dark, repair
 Near the sad spot, where murder must dispatch
 Emilia's soul to heav'n:—there shall I gain
 Quick notice of the deed; till when, I lie
 Bound upon thorns.—Come now the raven's song,
 Making sweet music as I pass along.

S C E N E II. The prison.

[*long and loud knocking*]

PROVOST.

What knocking's that?—Hark—was't not at
 the draw-bridge?—

I've sent to let him in:—some thing of moment:
 From the commandant sure.—But then so early!—
 What can it mean?—the noise they made, awoke me
 Out of a dream, wherein I thought of axes,
 Halters and knives, and heard the shrieks of women:
 Pray heav'n it prove not,—as, I fear, it may be,—
 Forerunner of some ill.

PROVOST.

PROVOST. SEBASTIAN. REGINALD. SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Sir, there's the provost.

PROVOST. *Aside.*

What men are these? [*receiving a letter from Sebastian*]
—this letter comes from Albert.

I do not like their looks.——Let's see.——What
says it?

REGINALD. *Apart to Sebastian.*

I hope sir, you do nothing, but by order?

SEBASTIAN.

Go to;—ne'er fear me man.——Have you but
courage

And your reward's to come.

PROVOST. *Aside.*

“Surrender!”——humph!——

REGINALD. *Apart.*

What's that he mutters there?

SEBASTIAN.

He's pond'ring only

On what the letter says.

REGINALD.

I thought he spoke.

PROVOST.

Your name sir, as I take it, is Sebastian.——

This letter bids me then surrender to you

The office I have here; [*to the servant who with-
draws*]
——Go you away.——

Sir, I obey the order;—'tis my duty;

Yet must you hear me in a slight petition,
Though of some moment too.

SEBASTIAN.

How may I serve you?

PROVOST.

My promise is engag'd to poor Emilia;
For her kind treatment here.—She is a creature,
Whose sorrows might make bankrupt of compassion,
And not be wept enough——

SEBASTIAN.

Sir, I have learn'd

Her melancholy story, and if tears
Sprung from distress in female bosoms only,
I should distrust my sex; so much these eyes
Have been at flow, to hear of her misfortunes:
Sincerely do I speak; for, tho' I say it,
Who should not praise myself;——yet does my
heart
E'en now bleed for her; and I should——believe
me——

Though I were not form'd liable to pity
My fellow creatures' pains,———feel heartily
For her partic'lar case:——be certain of it.

PROVOST.

You make me happy.——I will on the instant,
Go to my lord; whom, willingly I have not
In any thing, offended.——As I guess,
Some slanderous underminer hath induc'd him,
Thus to proceed with me.——I will go seek him.

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN. REGINALD.

SEBASTIAN.

Your labour will be lost; and now, good fellow,
With that, of which, already I have told you,
Take this along with you;—she stands accus'd
Of plotting Albert's death; and, though by law,—
I mean the forms and ceremonies of it,—
She is no convict; yet, in her own bosom,
Being guilty, she's condemn'd:—and this, I
tell you,
Out of the way, to move all little stops,
When you are at the deed.

REGINALD

Conduct me to her,
And better do I know the trade I live by,
Than stand to ask, what reasons make you wish her
Out of the way.

SEBASTIAN.

Thou'rt right lad; and I see,
There's metal in thy heart;—I hate a fellow
Who cannot, with an eye compos'd and settled
As that, which he would look with, on the moon,
Do, what weak souls call murder; but it merits
Another kind of name.—Are you determin'd?

REGINALD.

To murder her I am; yet, if more's needful,
Name but the sum, with which you'll pay my service,
And I'll perform that too.

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Then,—to our business.—

Sir—'tis no common murder, you are paid for ;
 It will require some art ;—and, to inform you,
 How much the worthy governor desires
 You should be safe, he 'as hit upon a plot,
 Which, you must own, well laid.—Here, is a dagger,
 It was her husband's once ; but how we got it,
 I shall not now relate.—This dagger therefore,
 When you have done the thing ; which—as you
 prize

Our safety and your own—take heed you leave not
 Half unperform'd ;—for fir, if she expire not
 Under your surgery ;—the mischief, meant
 Upon her head, will, at our door sit down
 And all of us undo.

REGINALD.

You mock me surely.

SEBASTIAN.

This dagger then,—when you have done your
 errand,
 Must be behind you left ; and, in such manner,
 That those, whom we may summon to observe her,
 May deem it her own guilt ;—and, to confirm
 The suicide still more, see, here's a letter,
 As written by herself, at large containing
 The motive, that has urg'd her to commit
 So desperate a deed.—Look that you leave it,
 (For 'twill befriend us much,)—upon her pillow,
 Bed, table, or where not.

REGI-

REGINALD.

Enough.—I'll do it.

SEBASTIAN.

That gall'ry is the entrance to her chamber ;—
Go in and falter not ;—be bold but silent ;
For better will it serve our present purpose,
To kill her as she sleeps.—I could best teach you
What I'd have done, and, with it too, the manner,
By doing all myself ;—but weightiest reasons
Deter me from the attempt.—Away.—About it.

SEBASTIAN. *Alone.*

Let dastard souls fear conscience ;—I have learn'd
To stifle its upbraidings, and the heel
That hath long kick'd against the pricks is now,
Grown senseless of their points.—Thoughts,
dark as night,
Habitual to my bosom, have shut out
All fears that mate with guilt.—

SEBASTIAN. REGINALD.

SEBASTIAN.

Have you dispatch'd it ?

REGINALD.

Emilia's fled.

SEBASTIAN.

Fled !—how ?—escap'd ?—

What mean you ?

REGINALD.

I found the casement open, and a ladder
Fix'd to the staple bar.

SEBAS- .

SEBASTIAN.

Wait here awhile :——
 I'll come to you again.——escap'd !——impossible,
[runs out]

REGINALD.

Then I have lost my fee.——In all my life
 I never was so foil'd.——

SEBASTIAN. *Returning.*

Fly to the turret
 Ring the alarm bell.——Wake the whole city.——
 That she is fled, tis true ; and at the window ;
 But far, she cannot be.——Thence to the castle——
 Call up the governor.——Yet stay,——the letter,
 Where is it ?——let me see 't.——the dagger like-
 They are both useless now :—— [wife :

SEBASTIAN. *Alone.*

My life upon it,
 The provost is concern'd.——'Tis more than
 likely ;——
 He shall be first secur'd, for after thinking
 Tells me th' escape was his ; in proof of which,
[the alarm is rung]
 No circumstance, like that of his entreating
 She might be kindly us'd,—intended doubtless—
 As the best means to hide his knowledge of it,
 Speaks half so much.——Mean while, for our own
 safety,
 Her flight we'll turn to use.——It speaks her guilty,
 No evidence more strong.——The sleepy citizens
 Bustle and flock together in the street

As

As if the town were fired.—How's this—lord
Albert?

SEBASTIAN. ALBERT. REGINALD.

SEBASTIAN.

So quickly up and here?

ALBERT.

Of that in future;—

What shall we do Sebastian?

SEBASTIAN.

Where's the provost?

Meet were it to attach him, for abetting
Emilia in her flight.—Our first proceedings
Must be with him; and, for the woman, Albert,
Never regard her once.—Conceal'd, she cannot
Remain within the town; but where's the provost?

ALBERT.

In the way here, I met him, by the ruins
Of the old abbey wall.

SEBASTIAN.

I'll fend and take him.

[to Reginald] Go seek the villain out, and bring
him hither

SEBASTIAN. ALBERT.

SEBASTIAN.

Say he is guiltless of it,—which he may be,—
Yet is that justice cunning, that on him
Fixes her eye; as 'twill a proper face,
Upon your conduct put, and foul suspicion,

Rob

Rob of her pow'r to prompt in comments on you,
Ev'ry man's tongue.—The strumpet that hath
fled us

Still is but one; yet being that;—when taken,
Let her be damn'd at once.—You seem not well?

ALBERT.

We are undone!—I would have spar'd the man
But was compell'd to yield.—Now, she is fled,
What will become of us?

SEBASTIAN.

Unsettled lord!
Does her escape possess you with these fears,
When you might see, it will revert to good
And prove more witness than a thousand tongues
Of her suppos'd offence?—call up your courage,
And shew yourself a man.—Proclaim reward
To him that brings her in.

ALBERT.

It is too late
To look back and retreat.

SEBASTIAN. ALBERT. REGINALD.

ALBERT.

Now where's the provost?

REGINALD.

Safe in the room within:—th' alarm had brought
On the way back. [him

ALBERT.

Myself will go and charge him.

SEBASTIAN.

Do, and perform it home.

ALBERT

ALBERT.

I am advis'd;—
Doubt nothing of my care.

SEBASTIAN. REGINALD.

REGINALD.

Further Sebastian—

In my way hence, to apprehend the provost,
Did I o'er hear a man (who's now in waiting)
Say to the thronging townsmen, that this morning
Nearly at one; west of the tow'r a furlong;
Muffled and masqu'd, a youth ran swiftly by him,
Making towards the wood.

SEBASTIAN.

I will pursue her.—

Follow me Reginald;—but first, more fully
Find out the way she took, and leave behind you
Word of our journey, that my lord may know it.
Lose not a moment: at the Grange, I'll wait you.

SCENE III. *Another part of the
prison.*

ALBERT. PROVOST. OFFICER.

ALBERT.

We were inform'd so provost, when we sent
Sebastian, with our warrant, for your office:—
If in her flight you have assisted,——speak
And nothing shall ensue,

PROVOST.

PROVOST.

I've spoke already.

On her entreaty, at the hour of midnight,
 Did I dispatch a letter to the sister;
 Answ'ring to which, a servant waited on her
 Close at the back, of him that bore the messuage:—
 If you demur to this, I will submit
 My conduct to strict test;—therefore appoint,
 The time I may be heard.

ALBERT.

[*Aside.*] His confidence
 Shews he knows all and warns me to dissemble.—
 I'm glad of this; and, 'twas to prove you honest,
 That I proceeded thus.—Yet, still there's something
 Due to the world, that always fond of slander,—
 On you will charge her flight;—and therefore,
 Provost,
 You must contentedly endure confinement,
 Till, by the rev'rend judges of the city,
 Your innocence is prov'd:—and think of this,
 But as a step of form,—a ceremony,
 Made sacred by long use; and be of heart;
 In me you have a friend.

PROVOST.

I will endure
 With patience, the suspicion I am under,
 Till I can clear myself.

ALBERT. *Alone.*

That shall be never;—
 Else will in him, this murder and seduction

Lay

Lay siege to my own life.—I have begun;
 And trav'ller like, whom falling snows surprise
 On the deserted heath, must now go on,
 Since equally, the path already trod,
 With danger threatens my foot.—The fever thus,
 Cries out for “more”, and every second draught's
 More welcome, as more needful than the first.—
 So do I likewise, burn with a disease,
 A fever of the soul; that with parch'd throat,
 Tho' with large swills of blood already gorg'd,
 “More, give me more” cries still: and therefore now
 Subservient to my pleasure,—shall the law
 Wreck its severity upon the provost:—
 So of his murder, do I wash my hands,
 Yet bid the knife perform.—I will about it.

S C E N E IV. *The forest.*

EMILIA *in man's apparel.*

Alas—I've travell'd hard through paths perplex'd
 That human feet scarce tread!—where will it end?
 I'm chang'd but in the habit of my sex.
 My nature's still the same.—That alters not
 As fashions do in drefs.—Oh!—would it did,
 That heav'n might still be mine!--and see, the sun,
 Forth to the world, exhibiting my shame,
 Peeps o'er yon distant hills.—Why should it shine?
 Why should the day come back, when on my cheek
 The never-fading blush of guilt must live,

F

And

And, on the swarthy countenance of night,
 Reflect a sickly beam;—enough to note
 Man's wickedness and mine.——There's no one
 honest;——

Guilt is hereditary;——every parent
 Gives it with life, to those he *calls* his children;
 And, by the stream of time, 'tis handed down
 To son from father,—like a ball of snow,
 Increasing as it rolls.——I've heard, these woods
 Are tenanted by thieves;——alas! I'm poor
 And have not to bestow, what rapine seeks:——
 Th' inestimable jewel of my soul,——
 Ev'n that is gone.——Oh sister! thou was't kind;
 To pity a poor wretch by all abandon'd:
 And, not alone this habit, but the ground
 I tread upon,—with guilt would tax my soul,
 Should I, in death, forget my pray'rs to heav'n
 For blessings on thy head.——If I was free'd
 By thy good hand,——thou freed'st me not to die
 (As I must)—here; my ev'ry hope of veng'ance,
 Gone like a dream.——[*she shrieks and falls.*]

EMILIA. ROLANDO. LUCIUS. VALENTINE.
 LEOLINE, and OTHERS.

ROLANDO.

Lay hands upon him there,
 But offer him no harm.——A goodly stripling!
 Well favour'd and young too!——but that his
 dress
 Gives my conceit the lie, I should pronounce him
 A girl

A girl upon my life.—Let him alone;
He's coming to his self.

VALENTINE.

I think 'twere meet
To search the place about—he must have friends;
For no one in his wits, would run the hazard
Of trav'ling here alone—I'll scour the forest.

ROLANDO.

Go with him, one or two;—but, should you meet
With those of the duke's train; whom, late last
night

We reconnoitred here,—avoid their sight:
There may be danger in't:—besides, some means
Will we in future find, whereby his grace
May learn he stands oblig'd, perhaps for life,
To banish'd men, by law made desperate.

VALENTINE.

That caution was in vain. [*Valentine and Leoline
depart.*]

ROLANDO.

How is it with you?—
Look:—he revives.—Be comforted good youth.
There's not a hair upon your head, shall find
Disparagement from us;—nor have you lost
What your good fortune, else, might have held forth;
Unless, it be a misery, for one
Bewilder'd in a wood, to have the hand

Of hospitality and friends stretch'd out,
By heav'n,—for his relief.

LUCIUS.

He hears you not;
Our numbers do but keep his fears awake:—
Good gentlemen, withdraw yourselves awhile,
And meet us at the cave ; where, by and by,
We'll bring him for refreshment.

EMILIA. ROLANDO. LUCIUS.

EMILIA.

If you'll kill me ;—
(And I am old enough to know, you never
Spare any, whom ill fortune throws among you ;)—
I must submit.

ROLANDO.

How strong his fears work in him !—
Talk not of killing.—True it is, we live
At enmity with man, but this instructs us
No farther than to rob him of the trash
With which he fills his purse.—The life we never
(When unprovok'd to't,)—touch.

EMILIA.

Is't possible !

LUCIUS.

If it were not,—why are you still alive,
To tax us with such guilt?—you, we had kill'd,
As we have others done ; but take due note
We suffer our revenge,—that Nemean beast—

Which

Which seldom can be tam'd, to couch in covert
As if we heard you not.

ROLANDO. ✕

There's in your face,
Something that claims our love.—then challenge
freely

The services you need.—We're not the men,
That the world quotes us for; but of a temper,—
I might perhaps say better,—yet as good
As they that censure us.

EMILIA.

I'm wrapt in wonder,
And know not what to say, but, that I thank you.

ROLANDO.

We guess you have your cares.—Perhaps you've
lost

A friend or father; mother or a wife:—
These are great losses all, and the vast world
No anodyne approv'd of, can hold out
To soothe the tortur'd mind, when ills so great
Delve at the root of life;—and only time,
Can, with oblivious hand, the life blood staunch
That issues at such wounds:—but, if hard press'd
By the relentless hand of pow'r, you came
Here for relief; or should th' unpitying arm
Of some hard creditor, be stretch'd forth against you;
Our forest cavern shall it's gates, fling back,
And screen you from pursuit.

EMILIA.

Oh heav'n!—my heart!

F 3

ROLANDO.

ROLANDO.

Give me your hand.—The sky seems overcast,
And threats us with a storm.—Assist me Lucius.—
Trust on our care; and, to deserve it better,
Say who you are.

[*they raise her.*]

EMILIA.

A poor unfort'nate youth
Trav'ling to Venice.

ROLANDO.

Good;—and wherefore thither?

EMILIA.

I have no friend,—(one whom I had, b'ing dead :)
'To minister to my wants; by which, fore pres'd,
I meant to seek the court; and, that I might not
Live on the bread of sloth, offer myself
To the great duke.

ROLANDO.

Go on.

EMILIA.

Now, comes the worst.—

I had a master,—one, whose passing goodness,
Words are too poor to paint;—we liv'd in Padua,
Happy indeed!—till the cross clouds of fortune
Frown'd on our spring.—Poor Julio,—my lord's
name,—

Was by the law, for ends most damnable,
Doom'd to a cruel death.

ROLANDO.

Break off your tale:—

The

The tempest grows apace.—Lead to the cave;—
There you shall tell the rest.—But what's your
name?

EMILIA.

They call me Polydore.

ROLANDO.

Your hand good Lucius.—
Be comforted;—I have a mind, persuades me
Your griefs are not past cure :—lean on my arm.

S C E N E V. *Another part of the
forest.*

LEOLINE.

Here is the copse, where Valentine agreed
We both of us, should meet.—I see him com-
ing.—
Hollo!—what speed?

LEOLINE. VALENTINE.

VALENTINE.

Stand Leoline apart;
For near yon range of citrons, I've discover'd
Two men, who from the very spot, must be
The objects of our search.—I've dogg'd 'em hither,
Where, as I think, they mean to come for shelter.
—Let us retire to mark them.—We may gather
Something from their own mouths, well worth our
knowledge.—
Go in before.—Do you not hear them coming?

SEBASTIAN. REGINALD; *and retired in a gap
on one side, VALENTINE and LEOLINE.*

SEBASTIAN.

This is a storm indeed !

REGINALD.

'Twill soon be spent,
Besides, we're now, well cover'd from its fury.—
Did you not hear a noise?

SEBASTIAN.

A noise?—what noise?

REGINALD.

Methought one cried "hollo."

SEBASTIAN.

That cannot be:—

This forest has no tenants, but a knot
Of robbers, that conceal themselves within it:—
'Twas nothing but the wind.

REGINALD.

Well—tell me now,
To pass our time away, whilst here we shelter :
What is this thing, you promis'd I should know of?

SEBASTIAN.

I have,—nor think I flatter thee, good Reginald,—
With an attentive eye, remark'd thy carriage,
Which is discreet; and therefore will I trust thee.

VALENTINE. *Aside.*

What may this mean!—observe him, but speak
nothing.

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Learn then that this Emilia, whom we're searching,
No more deserv'd, the desp'rate end we meant her,
Than the babe now unborn.

VALENTINE. *Aside.*

Do you mark that?

REGINALD.

This is a riddle fir:—explain the meaning.

SEBASTIAN.

First let me tell you then,—this pious Albert,—
The governor I mean,—is what the world,—
Knew they his life,—would stile a villain.

VALENTINE. *Aside.*

Albert?—

A deputy of the duke.—Pray mark him closely;
This may be worth our pains.

SEBASTIAN.

I say,—a villain—

If first,—for so he did—apart to tamper
Upon forbidden subjects with the wife,
Whilst Julio lay in hold; and to possess
Her beauty upon promise of his pardon;
Next, whilst he did it;—to dispatch myself,
With orders to strike off her husband's head;
Then, to convey it to the public ear,
That she had schem'd his death; and, this perform'd,
On my suggestion to attempt her life,
Though, in it, we have fail'd:—if these be deeds
That constitute a villain;—then, I say,
The governor is one.

VALEN-

VALENTINE. *Aside.*

Go to ;—go to ;—

The raven chides the crow.

SEBASTIAN.

I'm wet already.—

We must seek out some place, that's better shelter'd
Or face it in the field.—Come let's remove.

VALENTINE. *Aside.*

We'll take 'em unawares.—Leave me to deal
With him, that spoke just now.—They must
not 'scape us.—

You see, they're pointing here.

REGINALD.

Yonder's a gap.

Well cover'd from the storm.

SEBASTIAN.

Come on then.

VALENTINE. *Aside.*

Now.

[*As they advance to the gap, Valentine and
Leoline rush out upon them.*]

VALENTINE and LEOLINE.

Yield villains, or ye die.

[*Sebastian retiring, presses upon Reginald and
falls: Reginald runs off, pursued by Leoline.*]

VALENTINE.

After him, Leoline.

[*before Valentine can disarm Sebastian, he ex-
tricates his self, rises and draws.*]

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Thieves!—murder!—help!—Oh lord have mercy
on me.

[*he falls down wounded*]

VALENTINE.

Come fir;—your cash; [*rifling him*] let's fee;—
let's fee;—let's fee;—

What have we here?—a dagger!—how now villain!
Secretly arm'd!—fir by *your* leave lie there,——
And *you* along with him * —---your journey's spoil'd]
And you may now e'en sleep,——for fir, you cannot.——

Give me your hand.——I'm your apothecary:
Here, in the wet, you may perhaps catch cold;
Therefore along with me.—There's shelter for you.

[*drags him into the gap.*]

Anon, I'll bring you friends;——by th' laws of
war,

This sword is mine:——your cloak, I'll borrow of
you:——

I will make bold too, with this handkerchief,
And so, I leave you to your meditation.

A C T

* Alluding to his dagger, papers, and money.

A C T IV.

S C E N E I. *A dark cave in the forest.*

SEBASTIAN *fasten'd to the ground.*

W H A T place is this?—where am I?—
and what fate

Is for my crimes reserv'd?—death is the last,
Great privilege, which every wretch may claim.
When life, by conscience mortified, grows painful;
But, 'tis from me, shut out; and the sword's point,
The strangling cord, and the convulsive cup
Their friendly aid, deny;—yet nails, may do
The office of the knife.—If it be so,
Why, do I hesitate upon the means?
But that I fear to die!—had I a heart,
With wrong on wrong, the gentlest of her sex,
Most fiend like, to pursue, and do I now
That paltry courage lack, which would direct
My fingers to my throat?—'twere but to beat
This head against the pavement which I press,
And life were at an end;—but oh! I dread
This being to put off, having done that,
Which,—(heaven's preventing hand unstretch'd
forth)—must

Embitter the long next!—I hear 'em coming:—

Doubtless

Doubtless, to murder me!—oh that the earth,—
Wide op'ning,—would receive me in her womb,
And bury me at once.

SEBASTIAN. EMILIA.

EMILIA.

Sure this dark cave
In all, resembles hell;—and I, a fiend
Wander through ev'ry part of it, like one
Familiar to the place.—What shall I do?
These men have been my friends;—they've en-
tertain'd me,
Sooth'd me in sorrow, and their captain seems
Of a frank heart,—dispos'd to do me service;—
And, as I trust, would startle at the crimes
Which other men, call'd better than his self,
Ev'ry day practise.—Witchcraft is a sin
Less than ingratitude.—The ground is bloody!
Horror!—a groan!—help! murder, murder
murder!—

SEBASTIAN. EMILIA. ROLANDO. LUCIUS. VA-
LENTINE. *and* OTHERS.

ROLANDO.

Where is this villain now?—[*seeing Emilia ready to faint*]
—support him Lucius.

EMILIA.

Mercy!—oh mercy all!—I kill'd him not.

ROLAN-

ROLANDO.

Nor did we mean good Polydore, you did.
These are his papers here.—Look up and answer:
Know you this gentleman?—look up and speak.

SEBASTIAN.

I'll not.

ROLANDO.

What's that he says?

VALENTINE.

He says, he will not.

ROLANDO.

Thou 'adst better tho';—or, look well to the issue.
We'll force thee to obey.—know you this youth?

SEBASTIAN. *Aside.*

My guilt unmans me,—for I fear his threats.—
I know him not.

ROLANDO.

That's strange!—know *you* this villain?

EMILIA.

I recollect him now;—but sure, that title
Never belong'd to him:—he was a friend
To my poor mistress, and once went between her
And the vile governor.

ROLANDO.

You misconceive him.—

This is the miser'ant, by whose hellish counsel,
That Albert, you have told us of,—(a villain
Less than his self, because he lack'd his cunning)—
Hath been impell'd to all those horrid wrongs
Of Julio and his wife; and Albert had

Desisted

Desisted from the attempt, but that this ruffian,
 Whose temples are grown white, i' th' trade of sin,
 Like Satan at Eve's ear, stood by and said
 "Do thus and thus."

EMILIA.

Why speak not *you* Sebastian?—
 He's silent and 'tis true!—horrible villain!

ROLANDO.

Now, in his papers, did we find this letter,
 Which he, or his associate, counterfeited.—
 And, to increase the wonder, I must tell you,
 From his own mouth we've learn'd, that as he
 counsel'd,

Emilia's death was plan'd, but that her flight
 Stepp'd in to foil the deed; which, had it prosper'd,
 The letter, as we guess, was meant to point
 The murder on herself.

EMILIA.

Deep plotting villains!

LUCIUS. *Aside.*

Captain, a word with you. [*they all confer apart*]

EMILIA

[*reads*] "Stung with remorse

"That the good Albert, was by me accus'd,

"I have done this.—You that wipe off the blood

"Which to my dagger cleaves, intreat that
 heav'n

"May, in like manner, from my spotted soul,

"Wash ev'ry stain away." [*speaks*]—and
 here's the dagger.—

Spotted!

Spotted!——that's hard!——oh Albert!——villain,
villain!——

Thy triumph lasts too long.——I'd give the world
To be that devil, which thou long, hast serv'd;
So at thy side, this instant would I stand,
And, with a voice loud as the cannon's roar,
Tell thee, how near above thy perjur'd head
Veng'ance is hung.——Yet soft with this, my soul.
Thy passion may prove fatal; and disclose
The thing thou shouldst conceal.——Alas! I fear
It is already done.——Why do they whisper?——
Their eyes were fix'd upon me whilst I spoke,
Perusing ev'ry limb:——if it be so,
I am indeed a wretch, and of revenge
Must forfeit all my hopes.

ROLANDO *apart to the rest.*

Stand you aside,
And on that sign depart.——The rest I'll manage.
EMILIA.

I pray you, ask him sir, why Albert put
Emilia into hold.

ROLANDO.

You hear the question.

SEBASTIAN.

She did conspire his death.

EMILIA.

Sure you belye her.——
She was too good,——support me heav'n!——to
take
The breath she could not give.——Alas! she deem'd it
Sinful and cruel both, to lay her hand

On

On the offending fly.—Inform me then,
How should she murder Albert?

SEBASTIAN.

Wherefore urge you
Such shallow proofs as these?—she did attempt it.

EMILIA.

Wert thou great Hercules or Jove his self,
I would, with this weak arm, attempt to tear
Thy false tongue from thy throat, were no one by
To stay me from the deed.—Fie on thee, wretch!
Guilty of force, she might be; but, with choice
No babe sinn'd ever less;---and woe to Albert,
That by false promises,---the tricks of Satan,---
Won her to infamy and prostitution,
For her poor husband's life.—I' th' day of veng'ance
Let him look to it well.

ROLANDO.

Some where about
This solitary quarter of the heath,
Emilia must be hid.—Could we meet with her,
We would afford her help;—she should find
friends
Who, to the pressing wants of her weak sex,
Food and repose, would tenderly hold out,
And, to the wrongs which have been heap'd upon
her,
Veng'ance perhaps.

EMILIA.

For her sake, let me thank you:—
This generous compassion to a woman

G

Hated

Hated by all, brings tears into my eyes
Of unaffected joy.—What mean you, sir?

[*observing the banditti retire, upon a signal
from Rolando.*]

Pity!—oh pity!—on my knees I beg you
Call 'em again.—I will confess, hide nothing;
Hear me.—Oh! hear me, sir.

ROLANDO.

Be not alarm'd,
Emilia, if you are;—as, on my honour,
I do conceive no less;—that thing, made up
Of complicated wrong;—whom I lament,
And whom I would redress:—if you are she,
Say it at once.

SEBASTIAN.

Emilia—ah!—that name
Sinks me a second time—where now is deafness!

ROLANDO.

And yet, I will not press you to impeach
The honour of your sex:—reserve your blushes:
I will believe you that, which my late friendship,
Refining now to love,—(a guiltless passion)—
Tells me you are;—and think not, thou wrong'd
fair one,

By naming of that word, I meant to meet
With insult, your distress:—what I will do,
In favour of the veng'ance you may wish for,
Shall be the dictates of such sacred love,
As cloister'd virgins might inspire in hermits.

EMILIA.

EMILIA.

What shall I say?

ROLANDO.

Rise, madam, and command
The service of a friend.—That villain, Albert
Will we—heav'n's aid upon our just endeavours,
Drag forth to public answer.—For this slave,
Upon whose crimes, no rigour can inflict
A counterpoise of pains; he shall be us'd
To make your vengeance sure: and lo! as if
Heav'n sided on your part, the duke of Venice,
From whose high hand alone must issue justice,
Lies now encamp'd, upon the river's borders,
East of this place a mile.—I see your wonder.—
What he does here, we know not.—Hence, to find
him

Shall you be safely guided, and Mecnas
Hear your sad tale.—The tempest of the morning
Now is dispers'd:—look not upon the villain.
Instant shall you set out.—Come in, nor think
But all things will go well.

EMILIA.

I'm sick at heart.

SEBASTIAN. *Alone.*

What now becomes of me!—there is no hope,
Except as I repent.—The good Emilia
I have much injur'd;—but, b'ing good,—she must
Both pity and forgive, as she, her self,
Repenting, would find grace;—yet what avails
This goodness in an other, to blot out

One sin from my long 'count?—When we shall
meet

At the great day of doom, will human pardon
Block up the gates of hell, by justice bid
To take the murd'rer in?—prepost'rous question!
Why then, should this slight scratch extort one
groan,

Which but my body pains, and that must die,
When in the soul there is a gangrene fix'd,
In whose wide womb a thousand daggers rust,
That cannot be pluck'd out.—Oh! when will
come,

Madness indeed, to banish painful thought!

S C E N E II. *The duke's Tent.*

The duke's ATTENDANTS.

ATTENDANT.

Now my good brother lords;—this tempest past,
Shall we go forth; but where retires his grace?—
Soft! as I think, he comes.—[*the duke, with
Cornelio, comes in.*]

DUKE.

Good morrow, sirs;
I will not hunt to-day.—Cornelio here
Tells me strange things of Padua, that call out
For our quick presence there.—But say, Cornelio,
How did you gain this news?

COR-

CORNELIO.

Laſt night, my lord,
By the moon's beams—your grace retir'd to ſlum-
ber :——

Reading a-while, I heard th' alarum ſounded
Faint tho' it was ! and curious grown, to gather
What might have paſſ'd ; this morning with the
earlieſt,

Sent I my ſervant thither, who returning,
Brought this account ; which, as my duty bade me,
Have I reveal'd.

DUKE.

But ſhe it ſeems hath fled us :
Yet, if this land contains her, long ſhe ſhall not
Reſt in concealment, ſince, to apprehend her,
No ſum ſhall be too great.—I lov'd her once ;
But theſe, ſo broad offences, have wip'd out
Her mem'ry from my heart :—beſides I love
The truſty Albert too, and juſtice ſhall
Give him revenge.

ATTENDANT.

Will not your grace then hunt ?

DUKE.

No,—my good lord.—My ſpirits are depreſs'd ;
And I will hence for Padua ;—the intent
Of the once good Emilia, may have rais'd
Foes to our deputy there, that we, perhaps,
May by our preſence quell.—Prepare poſt horſes
For our departure hence.—When we return,

Will we to mirth ; and if lord Albert's safe,
Short shall our tarrying be.—[*a gentleman comes in.*]

GENTLEMAN.

There is a youth
Standing without ; who, in the name of heav'n,
Begs to behold your grace :—in vain, we've ask'd
him

How, and of whom, he's gain'd intelligence
Of your retreat ; nor, when to his intreaties
Answering, we said you were not to be spoke with
On a request like his, would he accept it.

DUKE.

Go then, Cornelio, you ; and with our answer
Send him away :—we have no time to lavish
Upon a trifle now.—Much grief hath made me
Not master of myself.—I must forget it.

SCENE III. *Another part of the Tent.*

CORNELIO. EMILIA. LUCIUS.

CORNELIO.

Speak with the duke ?

EMILIA.

And if, as I conceive,
You wait upon him here, do me the grace,
Which, were this Venice, I might freely claim,
Of speaking with my lord.

COR-

CORNELIO.

My lord's commands
Were positively urged:—you may depart;
Your audience unobtain'd:—he's now employ'd
In preparation for a journey hence,
To Padua, and this moment he sets out.

EMILIA.

To Padua said you, sir?—now, let me beg;
The rather, since the duke is so intent,—
That you deny me not.—I have a suit
Which must not be delay'd:—th' importance
of it

Calls for the present time, else had I not
Thus press'd on his repose.

CORNELIO.

Why,—What's the matter?
Pray you be gone—to tarry here were fruitless;
I dare not introduce you.

EMILIA.

Then, at least,
If it be so,—let me conjure you, sir,
To carry him this ring:—it is a token
Known to his grace, no less than his own hand,
For once the gem was his:—if you are question'd
Touching the owner—I intreat you'd tell him,
That, by the strangest chance, I light upon it,
Which is a secret—in his private hearing
Well worthy to be learn'd,—as it concerns
And, nearly too, his self.

CORNELIO.

Give me your ring;
 I'll bear it to his grace;—anon, expect
 Some answer to your message.—Wait here for it.

EMILIA. LUCIUS.

EMILIA.

I thank you for your pains, and now must beg
 That you withdraw awhile.—I would not have
 The duke observe you here.—Retire without,
 I'll speak to you again; 'till when, in patience,
 Wait till I send you word, which shall be shortly.

EMILIA. *Alone.*

'Tis not his death that I so much lament;—
 For many a woman hath her husband lost,
 Or soon or late must lose;—it is not that,
 Which makes life so uneas'ly sit upon me;
 But, that my soul, I have steep'd low in guilt
 To save him—and in vain.—Oh fool! fool! fool!
 What ordinance enjoins us to lay down
 The life, we could not on ourselves bestow,
 Though for the dearest friend?—There is no law
 To countenance such love.—What scorpions then
 Does heav'n not keep in store to punish her,
 Who,—to redeem a husband from that grave
 Which shall not hold him long,—consents to die
 For a long---long eternity!—The duke
 Must grant me justice, where my full blown wrongs
 Have

Have mark'd the name of villain;—that, once
gain'd,—

A long farewell to life.—I see him coming.

EMILIA. DUKE.

DUKE.

What mystery is this?—a boy!—who are you?

EMILIA.

One to affliction wedded,—yet not that
Which outwardly I seem.

DUKE.

Where did you get
The ring you sent me here?

EMILIA.

If I should say
A woman gave it me—your royal ear,
Would greatly be abus'd.

DUKE.

This ring I gave,
In token of my love, to one Emilia,
Then to my heart most dear.—Know you that
woman?
You had the ring of her!

EMILIA.

Oh my fad heart!—
See you this face, my lord?—observe it well;
And let the wrongs engrav'd so deeply there,
Assert that justice, which my tongue demands.

DUKE.

DUKE.

Why how is this?----Justice!----on what?----on whom?

EMILIA.

Upon a villain, whom the world calls Albert.

DUKE.

Villain thyself.

EMILIA.

If you deny my pray'r,
You are no lawful sov'reign, but a tyrant.
Calamity is bold.---I must have justice.

DUKE.

This is a strange demand.---If he's a villain,
Which he's not like to be ;---say, who you are
That dare to call him so.

EMILIA.

A wretched woman,
Once nam'd Emilia, sir.

DUKE.

That can not be ;---
Heav'n hinder that it should :---the honesty
Writ in thy face, too much hath won my love,
That I should think thou could'st so early climb
To infamy like hers.

EMILIA.

When wilt thou break ?

DUKE.

Wouldst thou persuade me then ;---but further
proof

Than

'Than what bare words can bring, must in my
breast

The certainty produce, that thou art what,
I would not wish 'thou wert :---let's see thy face.
Thy dress *may* be put on :---I now bethink me,---
If thou 'rt indeed Emilia, thy left arm
Was by an adder bit, and the mark still
Rests in the place.---Shew that, and I'll believe
Thou art no counterfeit ;---[*she uncovers her arm.*]
I'm sorry for it.

EMILIA.

'Tis not for life I sue,---read that---but veng'ance :
Veng'ance to sweeten death.---Oh ! noble sir,
Upon that paper, the proof hangs of more,
Than my swollen heart will give me leave to utter.
That Albert you so cherish, did suborn
A ruffian to destroy me ;---to which sin,
I could another add, but that the word's
Too vile to be pronounc'd.---The murd'ring of
me

Was his least crime, which, to conceal for ever,
He, or his partner, forg'd that lying letter,
Meaning to leave it in the chamber near me,
When they had done the deed.

DUKE.

" That the good Albert."---
What do I see ! ---- " intreat that heaven."---It
cannot,
Cannot be his !---Take therefore heed Emilia ;

If

If thou dost slander him, death shall want pains
To punish thee enough.

EMILIA.

I will be bound
To prove, sir, at your royal bar of justice,
That he's a villain, murd'rer, and seducer;
Breaker of oaths, and falser than mere words
Have pow'r to set him forth; or may all torments,
That cunning can devise for perjur'd wretches,
Fall on my crimes, and make the death I merit,
Fearful as just :---upon my knees I ask it.

DUKE.

I know not what to think.

EMILIA.

I do not wish
You should believe me yet;---only suspend
The judgment of my crimes, till I can prove
What Albert truly is.----I ask not much,
Yet little as it is, my knees shall sooner
Grow to the ground, than that, which I request,
Be lost for want of pray'rs :---think me then fix'd
Never to rise again, if you withhold
The justice I demand.

DUKE.

What shall I answer?

EMILIA.

By the dear ashes of the man I lov'd,
Torn from my arms by the perfidious Albert;
By the last honour of my sex;---my hopes
Of happiness destroy'd;---and by these tears,
These

Left, in distraction and despair, I vent
My curses upon heav'n; and by that deed,
Go to my grave, more criminal than all
My other sins, tho' great, had pow'r to make me.

I cannot bear this sorrow :---kneel no more,---
Who of my train are waiting?---let me rather
Credit than doubt too much.----I will for Padua
Immediately set out ;---yourself shall shortly
Under safe conduct come.---Where are our horses ?

Ready my lord.

Bid the attendants mount,
For we will lose no time ;---[*Emilia offers to speak
with Cornelio.*]

There is a gentleman, with whom I'd speak,
Attending me without.

Let him be fought ;
Nearly at noon shall both of you be heard.---
Your witnessess I doubt not will be ready ?

They shall be found in call.

DUKE.

DUKE.

I will myself
 Appoint you an escort ;---and on the instant
 Set out before.

EMILIA.

Humbly, my lord, I'm bound
 To thank you for this grace.

EMILIA. *Alone.*

I recollect,
 E'er my kind sister's woman, at the prison
 Took her adieu, these words she utter'd to me :
 " Wringing her hands, and mingling with her
 " accents
 " Shortly heav'd sighs, thus did my mistress bid me:
 " *Say to Emilia, if the cruel fever*
 " *Now in my blood, heav'n makes not mortal to*
 " *me,*
 " 'Tis my firm hope we yet shall see each other."
 Surely her pray'r was heard; and tho' I never,
 Never will bring pollution to her presence,
 Yet is my wish compleat ; since smiling veng'ance
 Comes now at last to make my death less bitter.

EMILIA. LUCIUS.

EMILIA.

Return, sir, to your friends---in every point
 Has my request been heard.

LUCIUS.

LUCIUS.

I know it well

I've seen the duke set out, and was inform'd
By him who sent me hither, that at noon
Your cause is to be heard :---doubt not our care.
To Padua will we straight.

EMILIA.

It is enough.

LUCIUS,

The villain, on whose witness hang the hopes
Of you and of ourselves, upon a litter
Will we convey with us.

EMILIA.

I pray you tell me,---

You have already told me---but my mind
Was at that time so hurt, as to impair
The office of my ear ;---how did you leave him ?
I can attend you now.

LUCIUS.

Worse than before,
When yourself saw him last.---The consciousness
Of his deep guilt, join'd with the pain he felt,
So wrought upon his mind, that it was fear'd
He shortly would go mad.

EMILIA.

Look to preserve

If possible, his life ;---to all of us
It is of moment great :----what rests, I leave
To you and your friends' diligence.---The duke

Com-

Commands that I depart, conducted hence
By some of his own train ;---therefore, farewell :
E'er ev'ning I will mend my wish with that
Which shall be worth your thanks,---Fail not at
Padua.

SCENE IV. *The house of Albert.*

ALBERT. REGINALD.

ALBERT.

Your name is Reginald ?---there's for your labour ;
And for Sebastian,---think of him no longer,
He cannot have escap'd.

REGINALD.

I fear so truly.

ALBERT.

Nay,---they spare none.---Wait here about the
house,

I'll speak to you again e'er night approaches ;
Mean while, as to thy bosom I have trusted
All the past night's transactions :---to be prosp'rous,
Lock up the secret there.

REGINALD.

Fear not, my lord.

ALBERT.

When I would see you, I will send you notice ;---
Leave me till then.

ALBERT.

ALBERT. *Alone.*

He must be dead—that's certain ;
 With him, Emilia too :——fatigue and terror
 Must, in the woods she fled to, have perform'd
 The dagger's purpose foil'd.——That she escap'd
 Hath doubly wrought me good ; first, that herself,
 On whose contracted brow sat wrongs, proclaiming
 Woe to my safety,—is deceas'd ; and, with her,
 Not less according to my wish ;—Sebastian,
 Gone to the dead :——two obstacles remov'd
 That lay athwart my peace :——for Julio,—he
 By justice was cut off, and nothing, I,
 In the world's sight, save as by law compell'd,
 Enforc'd to take him hence. Then live the provost ;
 For, in his life no thorn can goad my safety.——
 So might it be ; but I,—to quell entirely
 Foul apprehension,—will to judgment bring him
 On the succeeding morn ;—so, smooth my pillow
 With the same hand, that executes the sentence
 Of the kind law.——I grow in guilt ! I prosper !
 Guilt, did I say ? what guilt ? the fault, for certain,
 Lay in the tempter—I, the tempted only,—
 To the suggestion of her beauty yielded,
 Sinn'd on compulsion, and offended, where
 My nature was not free. How now ? what want you ?

SERVANT. *coming in.*

The duke is coming here.

ALBERT.

The duke !—a madman !
 Where did you dream this news ?—The duke's at
 Venice.

H

SER-

SERVANT.

My lord, I can assure you that his grace
Is in the suburbs now :——one of his train
Waits in the house here, and requests admittance.

ALBERT.

Merciful heav'n! The duke! What brings him
hither?

Fellow, come near me.

SERVANT.

What is't ails your lordship?

ALBERT.

He will discover all, and therefore——nothing.——
I must of force be calm.—Go to the prison;
Say to the goaler, I would see the provost;
Let him be brought forthwith.—Fly, and return
With all the speed thou canst.—I am too hot,
Impatient and susceptible of fear,
When nothing's at the worst. I'll sound the provost;
Gain him with gold, and that way, bid defiance
All that can threaten me.

ALBERT. REGINALD.

REGINALD.

My lord—my lord,
We are undone!——Emilia——

ALBERT.

What of her?—

REGINALD.

Is coming back to Padua.

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

Fire and devils !

Let us both fly.

REGINALD.

Our flight, sir, is cut off,

If that would do us good.—By now, Mecenas
Is almost at the gate.

ALBERT.

Distracting moment !

Mecenas coming hither ; and Emilia

On the way too !—come they together, said you ?

REGINALD.

Not in one company.—She's with his followers,
Whom he, it seems, outrides.

ALBERT.

To go to Venice :

Thither and back since midnight !—'tis impossible.

REGINALD.

Yet 'tis as true as there is light about us,

They are both coming here ;—and hark—his
trumpets.

ALBERT.

Have mercy on us heav'n !

SERVANT *coming back.*

My lord—the provost.

REGINALD.

I guess at your intentions, but you must

No longer think of that :—let me advise you,

Order him back.

ALBERT.

I know not what to do,
And therefore will be rul'd. Obey this gentleman.
[Reginald *whispers to the servant, who departs.*]
I now repent too late.

REGINALD.

The time is precious.—
Go in and meet the duke.—Support your innocence,
'Tis desperate I grant;—but we must take
Our confidence and courage from despair.
Call loudly to be heard.—I will be by,
And swear to what you say.—Our common safety
Goes hand in hand.—Submit with seeming joy
To what he may impose;—even loss of freedom
Say you will look on as the happy means
That shall your honour clear.—Again! he's coming.

ALBERT.

It is the doom's day call, and I am summon'd
To my last reck'ning.—Ruin'd, wretched Albert!

A C T

A C T V.

S C E N E I. *An apartment belonging
to Albert.**EMILIA in her proper dress.*

ONCE more—the habit of my guilt and shame
 Thrown off—I enter this detested house,
 Though not as I was wont, when, what I wish'd
 Was my lord's life;—now, breathing but revenge,
 Link'd with the restless damn'd.---Thou demon
 then,

Whatever be thy name,---why stimulate
 With guilt, increasing guilt,---my soul, in death
 To fix her anchor there?—What sight is this,
 Which, like a vision of the night, comes o'er me!
 It is my Julio,---my dear lord;---protect me;---
 Save me, ye faints! and thou, pale, mangled spirit,
 Rest in thy tomb.---I know thou com'st to tell me
 Not to forgive.---I will,—I will have veng'ance:
 Yet, whilst I'm tarrying here,---I lose the dearest
 Part of revenge.---I should have then been present,
 When, in his frightened ear, the good Mecenas
 Drumm'd his intent.---I should be now, too, by
 him,

H 3

Where,

Where, as he sits, he ponders on his danger.
 What have I lost!—Where,—where,—oh! where
 about me,

Lodges my spirit?—say,—that I may send it,
 Freed from its cumb'ring flesh, to torture Albert;
 And, in full concert to the groans he utters,
 Thunder damnation;—my revenge comes else
 Short of its wish.—But whither points my frenzy!—
 Let the grave speak, when I am shrouded in it;
 For, by the way of death, revenge must shortly
 Light me along, and join me there to Julio.
 Quickly I come.—'Till then, let pity slumber.

SCENE II. *A large hall, contiguous to
 the first scene.*

DUKE. OFFICERS of Justice.

DUKE.

Now take your places, rev'rend fathers all,
 And hither bring these parties that appeal
 For justice to the law.—You of the court,
 Know Albert was my friend.—The love I bore
 him,

No circumstance, thro' his whole course of life,
 But must bear witness.—From his infancy,
 Built I his fortunes; and his hopeful youth,

(Not

(Not my own son's more dear) in the warm fun
Of my protection, rear'd.—

DUKE. OFFICERS. ALBERT. EMILIA. RO-
LANDO. LUCIUS. REGINALD.

DUKE.

I'm sorry Albert

Thus to behold thee here :—if innocent,
That thy good name, which yet, hath been un-
blemish'd,

Suffers such wrong ;—if not, that thy offences
Must by myself be punish'd.—Take then counsel,
And the salvation of your soul hereafter,
Risque not to 'scape the law.—If you are guilty,
You will, in part, appease unerring justice,
Making your peace with heav'n by so much easier,
As, by how much, a gen'rous frank confession
Lightens your sentence here. Consider duly
This our advice, and answer to the question :—
Guilty or not ?

ALBERT.

My gracious lord, not guilty.

DUKE.

Heav'n send thee a deliv'rance.—You Emilia,
Hear his reply ; and therefore as you value
That, which your duty to yourself and heav'n
Bids you most prize,—your everlasting welfare,
Whilst you proceed against lord Albert here,
Take heed of perj'ry ; for of this be certain ;

H 4

Though

Though at our bar you gain a wicked verdict,
 And thro' the blindness of your judge, who cannot
 Read what the heart contains, to quick destruction
 Drive an unhappy man ; yet that hereafter,
 There is another bar, a dread tribunal,
 Where by a judge, who cannot err in judgment,
 Not only Albert,——but yourself,—Emilia,
 Shall be proceeded with,——less as you seem,
 Than as you truly are.

EMILIA.

My soul and body
 Both injur'd by that dev'l, could I redeem them
 From ruin irretrievable, I would
 Pledge once again, and forfeit if he proves
 Better than I have spoke him.

DUKE.

Not one only
 Is the appellant here ; but each, the other,
 On his own part, accuses.—[to Emilia.]—You, he
 says,
 Conspir'd against his life ;——do you confess it ?

EMILIA.

No ;---were I on my death-bed.

DUKE.

Then must Albert
 Bring proof of the attempt.—You have it ready ?

ALBERT.

I have a friend who, from the first throughout,
 Knows the whole plot :——what instruments, what
 means,

Heav'n

Heav'n and his self perverting their effects,
Were plann'd against my life.

DUKE.

That made appear,
Unburthens you of blame, and fixes all
Upon Emilia's head.—Let him be call'd.

ALBERT.

Unhappy as I am,—there lies my grief;
He is not to be found.

DUKE.

How's that!

ALBERT.

I fear
His zeal for his friend's service, hath brought down
Destruction on his life.

DUKE.

What! is he dead?

ALBERT.

Dead sir, and likewise murder'd.—It was he,
Who, when Emilia having broke from prison,
Took shelter in the forest west of Padua,
Led my pursuit;—come hither Reginald.—
Here is a man my liege,—his faithful servant;—
Who, had not heav'n been pleas'd to save him
from it,

Would have partook the fate of his poor master.

DUKE.

Come near me:—was the man, that Albert speaks
of,

Slain in thy company?

REGI-

REGINALD.

Yes, my dread lord.

DUKE.

Tell me by whom?—and wherefore did they kill him?

REGINALD.

There are a set of wretches who subsist
On plunder, lying harbour'd in that forest;—
Those men it was, who from an ambush leaping,
Seiz'd on Sebastian unawares, and he
Making defence, first murder'd and then robb'd
him.

EMILIA.

Oh my good lord!—that murder'd man he talks of,
I, also do accuse.

DUKE.

Know you this fellow?

EMILIA.

'Till now I never saw him;—but I pray you,
Let him be closely guarded.—May destruction
Whelm me the moment, that I fail to prove him
Guilty with Albert:—both,—both bloody vil-
lains.

DUKE.

Well, he is safe;—what can you urge against him?

EMILIA.

I know you think me mad; but of that malady,—
Whatever my great wrongs may make me shortly,
I'm hitherto as clear,—(the more's my sorrow,
Not having that, which of my injuries

Would.

Would the edge blunt,)—as th' infant yet unborn,
Is free of actual sin.

DUKE.

Alas!—poor woman!

EMILIA.

There is a man, my liege, hard by attending,—
And Albert knows him too,—who can disprove
Each syllable advanc'd, touching the man
Murder'd and robb'd.—Let me intreat your
 highness

That he be sent for straight;—this gentleman
Knows where he bides.

DUKE.

Some two or three attend him.

[Rolando *and Others go out.*]

EMILIA.

In the mean time, be pleas'd to read this paper,
It will explain itself.

ALBERT. *Aside.*

What means that paper!
What witness can she bring of that, which only
Lies here, conceal'd in darkness thick as Erebus,
And in the bosom of the slain Sebastian:
Her husband is at peace;—silenc'd for ever,
Deep in his grave interr'd.—Oh! wherefore did I
Venture the past?—if now, when most I lack it,
Failing in resolution,—I permit
Weak fears to shake me thus.

DUKE,

DUKE, *speaking of* Reginald.

Guard well that fellow :

Sirrah come near me.—Look-thou answer truly ;
Tell me ;—yet stay ;——I will bethink me :——

Albert,

Where is your provost ?

ALBERT.

Him, I thought it fitting,
So please you, to dismiss and send to prison.

DUKE.

Wherefore to pris'n ?

ALBERT.

'Twas he, my liege, abetted
Emilia's flight from law.

DUKE.

How know you this ?

ALBERT.

He has confess'd it, sir.

EMILIA.

He was compell'd then.

DUKE.

Emilia, speak not you.—Send to the prison :
Give him some token.—I will see this provost.

ALBERT.

Your grace shall be obey'd ; but if I might
Presume a word or two.—

DUKE.

Give him some token.—
Pray heav'n, I fear in vain.

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

There is my ring.

[one goes out.]

EMILIA.

Here comes my witness, sir;---the man I spoke of.

DUKE. OFFICERS. EMILIA. ALBERT. *and*
SEBASTIAN, *supported by* ROLANDO; *and*
OTHERS.

ALBERT. *Aside.*

What do I see!---Sebastian here and living!

DUKE.

Come,---which is he?---what's this?---is this your
witness?Emilia, why how now!---have you thrown off
All fear as well as shame?

EMILIA.

Gracious Mecenas.---

DUKE.

But woe upon thy head; for, on my honour,
Thou, and these wretches here, thy vile adherents,
Leagu'd, as I now discover, to destroy
Our deputy's good name, whose worth and ho-
nour

Stand both approv'd; and which, not all the arts
Of calumny can wound;---shall the laws terrors
Feel in their amplest forms.

EMILIA.

My lord, I come not
Harden'd in impudence, my countless sins,

By

By accusation of a guiltless bosom,
 Still to increase.—Oh! they already bear,—
 Like a hard burthen, pressing on the shoulders
 Of a tir'd man,---much,---much too heavy on me!
 But to demand your justice on a villain;
 Than whom, I still aver, there is no greater
 Through the wide world.

DUKE.

Fie—fie upon thee woman.

EMILIA.

If you regard a poor complaining widow—

DUKE.

Let go my robe.—I will not hear thy slanders.

ALBERT.

I have stood silent by; knowing, my lord,
 The malice of this woman, my accuser,
 Would on herself return.—This is the man
 I spoke of to your grace, whom, as it seems,
 Heav'n, by a kind of wonder, hath preserv'd
 For his friend's use.—But, wherefore thus I find
 him;

Or to what end Emilia brings him hither,
 I'm puzzled to divine;—only of this,
 I am at last convinc'd, that I owe all
 The shame I have indur'd, not to her malice,
 But a distemper'd mind.

DUKE.

Is that Sebastian?

ALBERT.

My dear and valu'd friend.—Alas !—speak to me.

[Sebastian struggles to get loose.]

Oh ! he is mad.

DUKE.

Be sure you hold him safely.

[the Provost is here brought in.]

SEBASTIAN.

Give,—give me way.—You vomit sulphur on me.—

This is the burning zone ;—I tread in flames :—
Will the clouds never screen me from the sun !—
Hot, hot, and parch'd !—Come down ye elements,
Let the sky fall,—whole cat'raets rush upon me ;
Burst this strong fence, and deluging my bosom,
Turn the fierce hell that rages there, to winter.

DUKE.

Madness indeed !—take him away.

SEBASTIAN.

Oh pity !

This is too much.—'Twas Albert stole thy honour ;

Turn then on him the scorpions of thy veng'ance.
Me thou shouldst spare ;—for tho' I held the
dagger,

He glories in the crime. — [he is born off.]

ALBERT.

Afflicted spirit !

How my heart shudders to behold his sufferings.—
But let him pass.—I hold Emilia's meaning
Now but too plain ;—and do demand, not kneel for,
Justice,

Justice, upon that forc'ress and the partners
Of her offence.—The wrongs that touch *me* only,
I, from my soul, forgive.—Impudent strumpet !
Where is my friend ?---Restore him to his reason :
Give me him back :—but oh!--vain wish ;---
thou canst not.—

No ;—the vile arts that have undone him, never
Shall his poor mind restore.—Then grant me
justice.—

My lord, I urge this boldly, for my honour
Lies now at stake ;---my dying friend requires it.

DUKE.

Albert ; this man, Sebastian, as thou callst him,
Speaks in his frenzy, from a dreadful knowledge
Of his great sin ; and howsoever we
May please to call him mad, yet, on my honour,
I should stand tax'd as partial, to imagine
Thou wert not guilty too.

ALBERT.

Must then my fate
(You cannot mean it should) depend, my lord,
On what a madman says ?

DUKE.

Oh ! are you come ?---
Provost draw near, and overlook this paper,
That from yourself, who best should know th' oc-
currence,
We may receive report how true 'tis written.

[*the provost peruses the paper, and the duke repairs
to his seat.*]

EMILIA.

This will confirm his guilt ;---fear not Rolando,
 For the great love Mecnas bore my husband,
 Will in his breast work much to grant that
 favour

'Tis my intent to beg.——Be certain of it :——
 Your——and your fellows' pardon——I will get
 you,
 As 'twere a light reward.

ALBERT. *Aside.*

All goes to wreck,
 And the deceiving angel, that has drawn
 My footing into guilt, now to his hell
 Flies back, and leaves me hopeless.——Ill betide
 Those wretches—— who like me,——for safety,
 place
 Dependence on the devil.

PROVOST. *Having read the paper.*

As I have hopes
 Of an eternal state, this heinous charge,
 I could be sworn, is true.

DUKE

But you, he says
 Conspir'd in her escape.——Why did you so ?

EMILIA.

If I may speak, 'tis mine, of that offence
 The provost to acquit ; for, on my soul,
 Not he, but my good sister, furnish'd forth
 The means by which I fled.

I

DUKE.

DUKE.

Thou vilest thing,
 Fall'n from on high, into a pit as deep
 As the first man, or Lucifer once did,——
 What shall I say to thee?

ALBERT.

Your pity, sir,
 I merit,—not your wrath.——My adversary,
 Ruing her husband's death, essay'd to wreck
 The loss upon my head:——that failing,—these,
 Still thirsting after blood, she hath suborn'd,
 On purpose to destroy me, and effect
 Her horrible desires.——Can I stand up
 Against so great a force, having no friend,
 Save my own innocence?——If I must fall,
 Heaven's will be done,—I must.—Yet for my judge
 To join with my accusers,——I confess:
 Is somewhat hard to bear.

EMILIA.

False hypocrite!

DUKE.

Emilia, thou wrong'd relick of a husband,
 Cut off by course of law;—the more's thy sorrow!
 Give me your pardon for my rash proceeding
 On your suppos'd offence.—I thought you guilty,
 And in that firm persuasion, spoke, what now
 My nature's griev'd to think of.——Double justice
 Thy injuries shall receive.—[to Rolando.] You,
 sir, appear
 As wishing to say something.

EMILIA.

This, my liegè,

D U K E.

ROLANDO.

D U K E.

ROLANDO:

D U K E.

ROLANDO.

D U K E.

[going.]

I 2

EMILIA.

Oh! stay, and hear him, sir.

ALBERT. *Aside.*

More than my hopes!

DUKE.

For you, sir, [*to Rolando.*] that defying our strict
law,——Once banish'd our dominions,—have again
Dar'd to return;—we do upon your head,
Pronounce th' immediate punishment of death:
You too, [*to the provost.*] the evidence of this base
woman,Leagu'd in vile compact, murd'rer like,—to suck
The blood of a just man, shall our displeasure,
Feel to your great repentance; but for thee, [*to*
Made nameless now by guilt, we shall [*Emilia.*
take timeTo study cruel torments:——for the present,
To prison with them all.

ALBERT.

Break off her hold.

EMILIA.

I will not let him go.—Dread sov'reign hear me.
Turn, turn your eye upon a wretched woman,
Low at your feet, and deign to grant me justice;
Left, in the pangs of death, I cry to heav'n,
And his unerring arm pursue the man,
Whose judgment wrong'd the friendless and the
widow.

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

My lord, I must intreat you in behalf
 Of this poor woman now.—The wrongs she's as
 done me,
 Here I blot out, and ask no reparation.—
 She challenges my pity.

EMILIA

Monster, peace!

I do refuse, detest, and scorn thy pity:—
 Such pity finds the wren, chirping to move
 The mercy of the hawk.—My lord, whatever,
 Whatever comes of me,—beware that serpent:—
 He hath a smooth look,—that's the speckled
 cov'ring

Which the eye loves; but there's a deadly sting
 Under his chequer'd coat.—Oh! guard against it.

ALBERT.

Poor frantic soul!

DUKE.

Infatuated woman!

Think'st thou so light of death, that thou must try
 All aggravating arts, to make that death
 Accompanied with tortures?—If we should
 Consent to thy desire, to which our mercy,
 Unworthy as thou art, shall scarcely drive us,
 What would it profit thee?

ALBERT.

Send her away;

'Tis my intreaty, sir.—You feed her frenzy.—
 She knows not what she says.

DUKE.

Let her alone ;

She seeks it all herself.

EMILIA.

Even for that,

I give you my whole thanks, and will stand bound
 To suffer the most grievous and foul pains,
 Which unrelenting cunning can invent,
 Or cruelty inflict,——if I not prove
 My accusations just,——all laid in truth
 No one in madness :—therefore I repeat,
 That Albert is a dev'l, damn'd as the fiend
 That tempted our first parents :—other names
 Of ravisher, seducer, murd'rer, hypocrite,
 Wronger of female virtue ; with the rest,
 Swelling the scroll of sin ;——all which he is,
 And which I will make good ;—I shall forbear
 Calling him dev'l,—to name.

DUKE.

Why, this is strange !

Come,—I will yield ;——but Albert, be not you
 Aggriev'd at this day's work :---when it is done,
 Your honour and your honesty,---that now
 Shine within narrow limits, like a lamp
 In a close room confin'd,---shall then break forth,
 And as a flaming taper, that reflects
 Light to the Ether, and its pitchy blaze
 Throws far into the night ;---all eyes attract
 To gaze upon its brightness.---Who comes here ?

[a servant enters.]

SER-

SERVANT.

Look to yourselves,---Sebastian hath broke loose,
From those that were his guard.

DUKE.

We see him coming :
Fear nothing,---you are safe :---guard here with
jav'lins.

ALBERT. *Afide.*

Oh I am gone again ! [Sebastian enters.]

SEBASTIAN,

Albert, I come

Fainting and weak ;---my glafs of life juſt out.---
Thy penitence to waken.——Oh ! be warn'd
By the ſad end I make.——There is no way
To put deceit on heaven.——Convinc'd, too late,
Of this important truth, I now muſt die,
Which had I ſooner known, as never then
My ſoul had lean'd to guilt,---not all the world
Should lure me back from death ;---but, as I am,
Worlds would I give, in barter, for one day,
My peace to make with heav'n : that may be thine.
Emilia,---'tis in vain.——I would ſay that
Which my full boſom heaves with,---but, alas !
All but theſe groans, the icy hand of death,
Stops in the paſſage.——You, that can look up
To heav'n,---pray for me.---Reginald come hither,
You may ſay ſomething :---do't, and clear Emilia.
Oh my loſt ſoul !——oh ! ſave me. —— [*dies.*]

EMILIA.

Stay Sebastian,
And my forgiveness take.

[*they all gather about the body.*]

ALBERT. *Aside.*

Forgiveness !---said she ?
Surely that word, if once again but utter'd,
Would sink me to the earth.---All's over now,
And my guilt known ;---yet wherefore should I
join

With my accusers, and against myself
Frankly confess ?---So from all mouths, keen curses
Load me in death :---let me shun that, and rather
Never speak more,---that pity may, in suffering,
Weep o'er my fault, not knowing my deservings.
I am resolv'd.

DUKE.

Bear him away.---Oh Albert !
Me, but for this, you had involv'd, a partner
Of your offence, by specious shews of virtue,
Holding my hand, when justice was demanded.---
Which, to atone, quick punishment must follow ;
Death, without mercy ;---and may heav'n have pity
On your immortal soul. [*to Reginald.*] Come hither
fellow :

Tell me the whole.

REGINALD.

Oh pardon ! and I will.

DUKE.

Hence to the torture with him.

REGI-

REGINALD.

Oh for pity!

DUKE.

Answer me then.—Speak not a word of pardon.
Tell me and truly!—wherefore was Emilia
Put into hold?

REGINALD.

To murder her, e'er morning.

ROLANDO.

So says the writing.----Further,—here's a dagger
Found in Sebastian's pocket;—and a letter,
Which they design'd;—their bloody bus'ness
finish'd,——

Leaving behind them in Emilia's chamber.

DUKE.

That it might seem self-murder?—artful villains!

ROLANDO.

Which they had done, but that Emilia's flight
Defeated their intents.

PROVOST.

Well mention'd, sir!——
For near the time she fled, this morning early,
Lord Albert sent his warrant by Sebastian,
Importing my discharge.

DUKE.

Too plain;—too plain!

PROVOST.

Besides I will be sworn, that with Sebastian,
Came this man to the prison.

REGI-

REGINALD.

I confess it,

DUKE.

Know you this dagger ?

REGINALD.

Oh pardon me ! that dagger,
Sebastian,—with the note he speaks of,—gave me,
Their use already known.—The writing, Albert
Forg'd for the purpose.

DUKE.

Right :—shew *him* the letter.

ALBERT.

I know it not.

EMILIA.

That dagger was my husband's,

REGINALD,

Sebastian told me so.

PROVOST.

And what still plainer —

DUKE.

No further proofs ;——it is too plain already,
That he is guilty,——for a thousand witnesses
Live in his cheek.——Will you—in pity, Albert,
Of your immortal soul,——make frank confession ;
Calling on heav'n for hope ?

ALBERT.

Hence with the word ;
My innocence is my stay.

DUKE.

DUKE.

Oh harden'd heart!—

You provost we restore ; but for this fellow,
 Who hath deserv'd his death,—to prison with him ;
 We will not hear him speak.

[Reginald is born off.]

EMILIA.

This gentleman,—

And these—have serv'd me much—

DUKE.

You shall not need
 To ask a boon for them ; and therefore Rhynsfault,
 Live once more in our favour ;—your possessions
 Do we give back.—To those so consoled with
 you,
 Our pardon shall extend.

ROLANDO.

Long live your grace.

EMILIA.

For this,—and for my justice on my wronger,
 I humbly give you thanks, and take my leave.

DUKE.

Go with her one or two.—Have comfort,—heav'n
 Hath listen'd to your pray'rs :—think but on
 that,

And all things shall go well.

[Emilia with Rolando and Others go off.]

I'm full of sorrow.

This Albert is thy work !—Oh barb'rous man,
 What hast thou done !—If thou that wast so good,
 Couldst

Couldst fall to such impiety,—this heart
 Shall henceforth no man trust.—Will you persist,
 And throw away that jewel of your soul,
 Which nothing can redeem?

ALBERT.

Art thou a judge?—
 Thou art,—and mayst condemn me to the axe,
 But canst not make me guilty,—to deserve it.

DUKE.

This is your sentence.—Hark!—what groan was
 that? [*another servant enters.*]

SERVANT.

Oh my good lord,—Emilia 'as kill'd herself.
 With her own hand, the deadly sword she guided,
 Snatch'd from the side of one that waited near her.
 And at her pray'r,—expiring do they bring her
 Here to your grace's presence;—having some-
 thing—
 (These were her words)—to speak—of much im-
 portance,
 Ere she would die.

DUKE.

Oh run and bid them hasten!

[*Emilia supported is brought in.*]

E M I L I A.

Bear me still nearer.—Albert, you behold me
 Now at my journey's end.—Oh! if you can
 Pity at last, a miserable woman,
 Hurl'd by thy hand, from innocence and honour,
 For your soul's sake confess.

DUKE.

DUKE.

Accursed moment !

EMILIA.

He that shall bear the news of this self murder,
To my poor sister's ear,——oh ! let him tell her,
Thus, by my death, atoning my offences,——
Once more I claim the title of a sister,
Dear as I was when yet of guilt unconscious.

DUKE.

Heav'n look in pity on her.

EMILIA.

Think not Albert,
That I am come,——thy few remaining moments
More to imbitter :——no ;---for may the wrongs
That have thus brought me low, be bury'd with
me.——

Raise me my friends.——Oh ! I am fainting.——

Albert,

Heav'n knows my heart,——and knows that I for-
give thee :——

May heav'n forgive thee too.

DUKE.

Exalted goodness !

EMILIA.

Let not my sov'reign, whilst my guilt with horror
Silent he views,---bar up his heart,---when pity
Knocks at the gate, and pleads to be admitted.---
Think on the cause---the love I bore a husband.---
Where are you all ? darkness and death are on me.

Oh

Oh for a moment!—Save me:—I am dying.—
Take me to mercy heav'n,---and pardon Albert.

[*dies.*]

ALBERT.

He must be more than man that can bear this!
Room for a fiend.—Ha! dead!—then take
me devils,

Share me among you.—Rend me into pieces.—

Give me a thousand lives, and ev'ry life

A thousand ages long!—Invent new torments;

And your old scorpions still employ on villains

Less than my self,---who never yet have murder'd

Goodness like this.—Give,---give,---oh quickly

give me,——

Give me,---a sword,---cord,---poison;---give me

justice.——

Justice?---oh no!—In kindness, let me rather

Fly to the block,——whilst warm in penitence,---

I can kneel down to death,---lest hell,---her footing

Once more gain here, and I be lost for ever.

DUKE.

We thank thee heav'n for this.

ALBERT.

Oh! I have finn'd

In the short compass of one fleeting day,

More than all hell has methods in an age,

Half to avenge.—Oh Julio!—Oh my friend!

From thy blest mansion, on so very' a villian,

Do not look down; lest murder and the guilt

Of my adult'ry, blast you.—Where Emilia!

Where

Where art thou now?—Oh! for a draught of Lethe
That I might lose the knowledge of those horrors
Soon to be mine.

DUKE.

Observe the hand of heav'n,
Which—to avenge the wrongs of this poor
woman
On the wind's wings—since yesterday—has
posted:

And with the means of punishment thus instant,
Close on the back of your offence has follow'd:
If you see this,—the obdurate part within you
Sure must relent, and your unfeeling nature
Start at the thought of woes that never finish.

ALBERT.

Start at the thought!—too fatal truth Mecnas,—

DUKE.

But from your duke and those conven'd to judge
you,

Prone as we are to infinite transgressions,
Far be the thought of teaching heav'n to punish.
All we can do, is with impartial justice
Here to condemn;—observe your sentence there-
fore.—

Of the worst guilt convicted,—we adjudge thee
Straight to the wheel; there to be bound and broken,
And, to the sight of all the gazing city,—
Languish till death.—Hence with him to the
scaffold;—

And,

And, of his gracious mercy,----heav'n look down
In pity of your soul.

[*Albert is carried off.*]

DUKE.

What now remains,
Is, that with proper honours we inter
The object that lies here.----Her punishment
She hath already born,-----and only heav'n
Can say how ill she died.----Bear hence the body.



NORTHUMBERLAND.

A

T. R A G E D Y.

B Y

MARK ANTHONY MEILAN.

Pernobilis tantum perferre doloris amari !
In freta dum fluvii current, dum montibus umbræ
Lustrabunt convexa, polus dum sidera pascet :
Semper honos, nomenque tuum, laudesque manebunt.

VIRGILII Æneidos I.

L O N D O N,

Printed by EDWARD COX, in *Russel-street*, *Covent Garden*,

F O R T H E A U T H O R :

A N D S O L D B Y

B. WHITE, in *Fleet-street*; RICHARDSON and

URQUHART, under the *Royal Exchange*; and

C. MARSH, *Charing-Crofs*.

NORTHUMBERLAND

J. R. A. G. D. Y.

13

MARSHALL THOMAS



WILSON & SONS

LONDON

1870

Printed by

W. & A. G. D. Y.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following tragedy was begun by the author, at a time he was but seventeen years of age ; when, thinking his self qualified to execute a subject of this nature ; but, having no proper story to proceed upon ; he chose to gratify his vanity, by building on another man's foundation, rather than damp the spirit of his poetic fancy, when, he imagined, it wanted to blaze forth. The play, accordingly in its first state, bore a near resemblance to the LADY JANE GREY, of Mr. ROWE ; and, as such, lay by the author upwards of four years ; when revising his past toil, and deeming it a pity, that the pains he had taken in the composition of it, should be entirely thrown away, he resumed the labouring oar, and modelled it anew ; after which, it was again thrown by for two more years, till called forth to appear in the manner it now does.—If any thing will recommend

ADVERTISEMENT.

mend the piece, it must be the language, which has been much improved by the assistance of a very intelligent and polite gentleman, who favoured the author, by pointing out several passages that might have been greatly amended.—He hopes, nevertheless, that the reader, in the perusal of it, will not imagine his self sitting down to a treat already tasted of, as the incidents leading to the catastrophe, are all different from those employed by Mr. ROWE, and will, as he conceives, be found more conformable to History.

VERSES,

V E R S E S,

ADDRESSED to the AUTHOR,

By CAPT. CALDERWOOD,

Of Great Tichfield-street.

IF British hearts can melt at British woes,
Or patriot zeal resent her country's foes,
Thy tragic tale, thus elegantly told,
Shall charm the tender, and inspire the bold.
Too long the gen'rous tribute of our tears,
We've lavish'd upon scenes, now sunk in years ;
Whilst deeds, that to more modern times belong,
Though high in fame, are yet unknown in song :
Shall Roman names still tremble on our lyres,
Whilst the achievements of our own brave fires,
Which, by the muse adorn'd, might raise our young
To emulation's heights,—remain unsung ?
Some few indeed,—of England's sons, when dead,
Who nobly conquer'd, or as nobly bled,---
Scorn not to sing ;—but, can a *few* rehearse
The deeds of those, who claim th' applauding verse,
When the great task, whole ages might consume,
Nor end, perhaps, but with the gen'ral doom ?

Not that thy muse, of war delights to sing,
Or broods o'er fields of blood, with horrid wing :
Far other strains,—in her attempt to soar,—
On the pleas'd ear, her magic numbers pour ;
For, if soft motives please the softer mind,
Suffolk's fair daughter shall not fail to find

From

VERSES, addressed to the AUTHOR.

From ev'ry fair one's eye, spontaneous flow
The drop, which always pity should bestow.
She merits sure a tear, who greatly strove
To sacrifice a kingdom to her love;
And who, at last, by dire misfortunes driv'n,
Gave up with joy,—even love it's self to heav'n.

THE CHARACTERS.

EDWARD VI.

LADY GREY, sometime Queen.
DUKE of SUFFOLK, her Father.
DUKE of NORTHUMBERLAND.
EARL of WARWICK, his Son.
LORD GUILDFORD DUDLEY, another Son.
MARQUIS of NORTHAMPTON.
EARL of HUNTINGDON.

QUEEN MARY.
EARL of ARUNDEL.
BEAUFORT, his Friend.
LORD GARDINER, Bishop of *Winchester*.
EARL of SUSSEX.
SIR THOMAS CHENEY.

Other LORDS of the Council. LIEUTENANT of
the Tower. ATTENDANTS. OFFICERS.
GUARDS. MESSENGERS. and COMMON PEOPLE.

The SCENE lies principally in the TOWER.



NORTHUMBERLAND.

A C T I.

SCENE I. *An apartment in the king's palace.*

ARUNDEL. BEAUFORT.

BEAUFORT.

WHAT of the king,—my lord,—can you inform me?

ARUNDEL.

Nothing, but what you may have heard already;
His malady, no med'cine can remove,
For art has lavish'd all its means in vain,
To rescue him from death.

B

BEAU-

2 NORTHUMBERLAND.

BEAUFORT.

'Tis pitiful!----

For, in a case like his, th' afflicted man,
Conspiring with the fit, through mere impatience,
Proceeding from young blood, full oft is brought
The sooner to his end.

ARUNDEL.

In that, the king,
Somewhat affecting age, beholds his fate,
As if by slow degrees, it had approach'd
Familiar to his eye; not stole upon him
As thieves who rob by night.

BEAUFORT.

Think you his death,
Will shake our country's peace?—Already, Rome
Forms distant hopes, that fortune, grown less coy,
Once more will seat her with dominion here,
When the king dies, and Mary fills the throne.

ARUNDEL.

Therefore, to guard against an ill so fatal
To our new fangled faith, the lords of council
Summon'd by Edward, shortly mean to meet,
And I am sent for too.

BEAUFORT.

The council, say you?
May I request what's meant to be determin'd?

ARUNDEL.

More on that head, hereafter I may tell you:
Mean while, 'tis whisper'd that the king intends

Bar-

Barring most wrongfully his sister's claim
 To England's vacant throne, and that already
 The daughter of old Suffolk, lady Jane,
 Stands his adopted heir; but why 'tis so,
 I cannot, were my life dependant on it,
 Make other guesses, than what th' ambitious views
 Of his usurping fav'rite point out to me.

BEAUFORT.

Something of this, though with no strong assurance,
 I have before been told.----The crafty duke,
 In the king's death, as in a glass, foresees
 His pow'r must suffer wreck, and therefore plies
 him,

Urging religious doubts,—— (as wicked men
 Cite law and gospel for the worst designs)——
 To place the sceptre in his cousin's hands,
 Whom,—as I farther learn,—his son, lord Guild-
 ford,

Full long has su'd to òn the theme of love:

ARUNDEL.

Well have you, Beaufort, learn'd; and to
 confirm

What were else full of doubt, need we remark,
 No other way to keep the tempest off,
 Which must, when Edward dies, fall heavy on him,
 Lies open to his choice:—should that miscarry,
 Good night at once to Dudley's house for ever.

BEAUFORT.

Or I mistake, all eyes already turn
 From the young king, as from a man condemn'd

To the devouring grave, bright with the hopes
 That the time now is come, when-sweet revenge
 Over the head of this Northumberland,
 Shall her wide wings stretch out:—and you,—
 ev'n you,
 Profess him no good will.

ARUNDEL.

You blame me then?

BEAUFORT.

Go to;—I meant it not;—yet I must say,
 He were scarce guilty, if yourself alone
 Had reason to complain.—The fall of Somerset
 Shall brand his name with infamy for ever.
 And be you sure,—his blood,—like Abel's, spilt
 By horrid machination,—shall call out
 In some unguarded hour, to heav'n for veng'ance,
 When Edward is no more; by whom, now screen'd,
 He braves us in his fears.

ARUNDEL.

But see, he comes.—

Such is the colour of our present times,
 In policy, we may not seem displeas'd.
 Do you withdraw:—anon, we'll meet again.
 I must dissemble now;—foothe,—fawn—protest,—
 And like the vane, upon a steeple's top,
 Smoothly veer round with ev'ry wind that blows.

ARUNDEL. NORTHUMBERLAND.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Health and good morrow to my lord of Arundel.

ARUN-

NORTHUMBERLAND. 5

ARUNDEL.

How fares his majesty?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

A day of grief
To England, this!—Just living and no more.

ARUNDEL.

It might indeed be better for us all,
Should the king live; and yet, forgive me heav'n,
If notwithstanding what thou hast decreed
To make us weep in blood, I see a dawn
Of comfort rise on our benighted hopes;
For let our sov'reign die, still have we left
A chief, our country's boast, to fight her cause,
Whilst great Northumberland can lift a sword,
To quell the pow'r of treason in its birth.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

If I were prone to disbelief or doubt,
I should distrust thy praise:—smooth flatt'ring
strains

Are the sure engines, in a villain's mouth,
For the commission of his purposes:
So do we find the knave and parasite
In the same man at once;—but thy great soul,
Disdains all little arts, nor will I wrong
So much, the worth I praise, as to suppose
Thou speak'st me fair, and mean'st not as thou
say'st.

ARUNDEL.

How as I say?

6 NORTHUMBERLAND.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I am not to be taught,
What cause you have to hold me adverse to you ;
Yet, my good lord, though I have wrong'd you
much ;

Think only on the motives that impell'd me,
They were my fov'reign and my country's love,
And you must pardon me.

ARUNDEL. *Afide.*

Dissembling villain !

NORTHUMBERLAND.

For, if so prompted, I have gone too far ;
Pursuing the strict statutes of the realm,
'Till what I thought was equity, oppress'd ;
Yet still, I stand excus'd ;—for where's the man,
That never yet, too rigid in his virtues,
Push'd them beyond their bounds ?

ARUNDEL,

My lord, no more :
We are all men ;——the best of us have faults ;
He then does well, who from his mem'ry blots
Th' offences of a friend.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Thou upright man,
Whose love I now must prize !—embrace we both,
Forgetting all things past.—By nature form'd
Too,—too impetuous, violent and rash,
Full often have I err'd.—Be thou, my friend,
My Pylades, my oracle, my law :
Oppose thy prudence to my hasty passions ;

For

NORTHUMBERLAND. 7

For now fate labours with a vast event,
And Edward's death will call us both to action.

ARUNDEL.

Such as I am,—I'm yours.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Then let us seize
Th' occasion e'er it slip us, and engross
The utmost pow'rs we can.—To aid our toils,
We want not friends, for I have found no few
Dispos'd to join with us.—Be it your care
To use your int'rest too; that, on the instant,
We may be ready to inforce obedience,
Should the king will,—(I speak but in conjecture,
And to prevent the worst)—his crown and throne,
As vulgar tongues report,

ARUNDEL.

Doubt not my friendship.

NORTHUMBERLAND. *Alone.*

This wasp appeas'd, whose sting has poison in it,
Shews half my purpose done.—What rests is
this :

Push on my son to ply th' intended queen
With offers of his hand :—she loves him well,
And can deny him nought.—It must be so.
The fire shall owe his safety to the son :—
And lo ! as if heav'n sided with my wish,
See where he comes.

8 NORTHUMBERLAND.

NORTHUMBERLAND. GUILDFORD.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

It looks not Guildford, well,
That you should vent your tears in corners thus,
Secreted from the king ;——and though I know,
Full well, the tenderneſs that ſways your heart,
That cannot bear to be a willing witneſs
Of his laſt pangs, yet I muſt chide you fir,
That weighing well your nice dependant ſtate,
You ſtrive not to direct your nature's bent,
By prudence and the courteſy of courts.

GUILDFORD.

What means my honour'd lord ?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What means my ſon,
Thus all apart, ſecluded from the court,
Fooliſhly fond, to paſs a time ſo precious,
Weeping alone ?——full often has the king
Sent from his ſickly bed a feeble voice,
Kindly enquiring for you ;——but in vain ;——
No Guildford could he ſee.——Now at an hour
When matters are in act, which rightly manag'd,
May liſt you to the ſummit of ambition,
To ſhut yourſelf up to your private griefs,
Seems ſuch a want of policy and craft,
As not a father's fondneſs can excuſe.

GUILDFORD.

O think not, fir, ſo meanly of your ſon,
As to ſuppoſe theſe tears are taught to flow

At

NORTHUMBERLAND. 9

At the command of art:—were I indeed
A monster of my kind, a wretch like that,
Deaf to the voice of honour and of love,
I should in truth be curs'd!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I've gone too far.—

Come to my arms, thou honour of my name,
And let me bless thee for thy wond'rous worth,
Which thus, I did but prove.—Thou art my son.
Then listen well, for on a high concern,
I have to talk with you.

GUILDFORD.

Command me, sir;

And let it be my study to obey.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

The king, whose cares still wake for England's
good,
Means to exclude his sister from the crown;
On whom he knows, Rome fixes ev'ry hope
In her approaching reign.—His widow'd realms
Devolve to Lady Jane; this news,—apart,—
From Edward have I learn'd, who presently
Convenes a council to confirm the grant,
And call her highness, queen.

GUILDFORD.

If in this land

One may be found, endow'd with heart and head,
To execute a trust so eminent,
It must be she.

NOR-

10 NORTHUMBERLAND.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

You have too long, my son,
Vainly address'd you to this beauteous fair,
Who, with a maiden's modesty, declines
The offer of your hand.—By my advice,
This matter shall no longer be delay'd,
Since Edward's death, that lifts her to a throne,
May cut off all your hopes: then quickly go,—
For time is precious now,—use ev'ry art
To bend her to your suit, and soon the priest,
Perhaps this very night, shall make you one.

GUILDFORD.

Your words amaze me sir.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I see it well.—

I read it in your looks;—but haste and go.

GUILDFORD.

What do I hear!—Oh sir, forgive your son,
Who cannot, in a point like this, obey;
Since at this juncture, when the pious maid,
Lost to all joy, bewails her sov'reign's fate,
So bluntly to intrude upon her griefs,
Were cruelty indeed!—Mistake me not,—
I dare do any thing, that might become
The sacred flame of love; but to do more,—
There,—there indeed, I own my cowardice;
And hold it best, for ever to remain,
From the dear object of my soul shut out,—
Oh curse beyond comparison! than give her
A moment of disquietude.

NOR-

NORTHUMBERLAND. 11

NORTHUMBERLAND.

'Tis true;

I would not recommend a time like this,
To plead a love suit in a lady's ear;
But, when a throne depends upon the issue,
For a queen's husband is a king in fact,
Where is the bar that may not be o'erleap'd,
And honour rest unhurt?

GUILDFORD.

Why,—let that be,

Yet still I nothing gain, if her consent
Be wanting to the blessing I request:—
And how should she consent, when grief shuts up
The passage to her heart?—alas! my father,
That circumstance alone, forbids all hope,
And 'twould be madness to indulge a thought
Of possible success.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Madness?—why no:—

The queen is diffident, and thinks her talents
Illy adapted to discharge the cares
Attendant on a throne,—since, when acquainted
With what her fortune now is working for her,
She dwelt upon her youth, express'd her fears,
That faction would start up, to vex her reign;
And urg'd besides, another's right to rule,
As mightiest obstacles, which she conceiv'd,
Were rais'd by heav'n to bar her from the crown.—
Would you then offer her the honest means
Of sharing in her toils, I dare assert,

She

12 NORTHUMBERLAND.

She would, for once, exceed those fancied rules,
Which formal minds affect to talk of much,
When decency they mean, and give you up
Her hand, her heart, and with them, half her throne.

GUILDFORD.

Grant we all this, yet still I must object
To that which you would hope. Each heart, each
tongue,

With licence, would upbraid her sacred name,
If, at a time like this, devote to grief,
She should her hand bestow.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

My last reply
Will likewise answer this.

GUILDFORD.

Then too her parents ?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

There also have I labour'd with success
In your behalf ;—our noble friend the duke,
Whose wishes for this happy union, keep
Due pace with mine, consenting to the match,
Already with the dutchess, has inform'd
His daughter of their will.

GUILDFORD.

If I must go,
Give me your pray'rs : I will about it straight,
Though much I doubt success.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Do ; and may heav'n
Prosper thy suit, and make a father happy.

GUILD-

NORTHUMBERLAND. 13

GUILDFORD. *Alone.*

A most unwonted melancholy weighs me
 With anguish to the earth.—Why, why is this?
 Why, at a time like this; good heav'n, inform me,
 Must I, to prove my duty to a father,
 Touch on a theme, that cannot but offend
 The bosom I address?—Cruel necessity!
 Under whose sanction, must my suit be urg'd,
 And put upon the fortune of a die,
 Which failing, all is lost.—Besfriend me then,
 Ye pow'rs that know the secrets of all hearts,
 And, when I kneel, incline the fair one's ear
 To the request I make.—But see, she comes,
 So lovely in her griefs, as if heav'n meant,
 In mercy to the people he afflicts,
 By the fair mourner's means, to make us grow
 Enamour'd with distress.

GUILDFORD. GREY.

GUILDFORD.

Ye tears that flow
 From virtue's sacred source, with what command
 Ye bend our passions to confess your charms.
 Magic unmix'd with art!—when sorrow's self
 Can add such graces to the fair we love.

GREY.

Oh Guildford! rather join thy tears to mine,
 And mourn for England's loss, in Edward's death;
 A heavy loss, which quickly must succeed,—

Than

14 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Than vainly flatter this unhappy form,
Whose pow'r of pleasing's lost.—Thou say'st, the
tears

By virtue shed, to beauty add new grace :——
Oh!—were thy friendly flattery but just,
I would indeed outrival all my sex,
Pre-eminent in beauty as in grief,
Since Edward dies, and with him all our hopes.

GUILDFORD.

Heav'n with affliction always mingles mercy,
Equally good in that which he bestows,
As wise in what he takes. Though Edward's death
May, for a time, sit heavy on our souls,
On thee,—a people's eager eyes are fix'd,
Who, from thy equal virtues, hope to find
Whate'er they lose in him.

GREY.

Oh ! do not think,
I covet the possession of a crown :
Would heav'n but hear me, this should be my
pray'r,——
Safe, at a distance from the cares of state,
To fix my humble lot :——there, throwing off
The memory of all fantastic joys,
I'd wed my soul to grief, forget the world,
And pour th' incessant tear o'er Edward's urn.

GUILDFORD.

Exalted virtue !——but I stay too long ;
Hence then my love, and haste we to some place,
Where, in thy list'ning ear, my burthen'd heart

May

NORTHUMBERLAND. 15

May pour out its request,——for I have much,
Much to reveal, of moment to us both :
When, should you deign one smile, well pleas'd I'll
own,

Not all the woes that now oppress my soul,
Nor those which fortune may in future bring,
To paint the chequer'd scenery of life,
Shall damp the joys my sov'reign can bestow ;
Or check my transports with one real woe.

SCENE II. *Another apartment.*

EDWARD. NORTHUMBERLAND. SUFFOLK. LORDS.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

How fares your majesty ?

EDWARD.

Oh sick, sick, sick !

This cruel fever rolls through ev'ry vein,
A liquid fire that burns my bowels up.——
Bear me, oh ! bear me hence to Iceland's plains,
Where I may wallow in eternal snow ;
Or one of you,—my Lazarus, my friend,—
In the refreshing stream your finger dip,
To comfort my parch'd tongue.

SUFFOLK.

Oh ! talk not thus.

EDWARD.

Where is our gentle cousin, lady Jane ?

NOR-

NORTHUMBERLAND.

But now she left the room, and is retir'd
Where best, she may indulge her tears apart.

EDWARD.

Go one of you, and bring her to our presence.

EDWARD. SUFFOLK. LORDS.

EDWARD.

Lords, I am faint!—the cordage of my heart
Is almost crack'd in twain!—my life depends
On one poor hair, no stronger than a web,
That needs must quickly break!—Oh! you are
 come
Most fitly as I wish'd.

EDWARD. NORTHUMBERLAND. SUFFOLK. GREY.
LORDS.

EDWARD.

Draw near me all ;
And my fair cousin you, this flood of tears
Permit not thus to fall :—I am but one ;
One in a world ; and heav'n, that lays the doom
Of death upon mankind, you but offend,
By murm'ring at the loss, which he decrees.

GREY.

Heav'n guard the king, and visit his afflictions
With comfort from above.

EDWARD.

NORTHUMBERLAND: 17

EDWARD.

Thy pray'r is heard,
And all is tranquil here, though, from without,
Saucy affliction makes its rude attack,
Batt'ring the walls of life:—How poor a thing
Seem now to you the rights of majesty,
When, with the meanest peasant in the land,
That the sun wakes to his returning cares,
It must endure these pains!—how weak his boast,
Whose pow'r, though by surrounding seas unstay'd,
Is impotence, compar'd with this dread king,—
This tyrant lord, who rules o're empty shades,
Whose realms are night, whose subjects are the dead!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Oh! cease this mortifying strain, that wounds
Beyond the reach of steel.

EDWARD.

Said I, my friends,
That all was tranquil here?—Alas 'tis false!
Ten thousand anxious thoughts distract my soul,
Which reason has no anodyne to cure.

SUFFOLK.

Kings are the care of heav'n.

EDWARD.

Oh!—when I think,—
And think I must, upon a theme so dear,
While life remains to animate my clay:—
What ills my bleeding country may endure
When I am dead;—what wounds the church sustain,
For Mary is a friend profess'd to Rome,
And will adopt her views:—then, then, I own
I am a wretch indeed.

C

GREY.

GREY.

Heav'n will provide
 A parent for the land, when royal Edward,
 Long may he reign, gives up his sceptre here,
 For one in paradise.

EDWARD.

My fire, whose name
 Be ever blest'd, you are not now to learn,
 Did, by his commons, from the throne, exclude
 Our sister Mary ; giving up to us,
 And to our heirs, the reins of government ;
 In the default of which on our demise,
 As so it now falls out, it was decreed
 The kingdom should be hers : We therefore, lords,
 As holding next to heav'n our sovereign sway,
 Dependant on no pow'r beneath the skies ;
 And, that the sceptre never may be sway'd
 By issue, got upon a lewd love bed,
 As Mary has been prov'd,—have, by advice
 Of these grave peers and loving counsellors,
 Determin'd to reject our father's will,
 Seeking a sov'reign in some other line ;
 And for this purpose are we now conven'd.—
 Say then, in God's name, who is left to fill
 Our vacant throne ?—for so it will be soon.—
 What kindred to our blood, what near ally,
 Remains there yet, that may the regal seat
 Worthily fill ; and the approaching storm,
 Threat'ning our church,—by heav'nly aid repel ?

I read.

NORTHUMBERLAND: 19

I read, my lords, your wishes in your eyes :——
On you, our worthy and right loving cousin,
The general voice succeeds.

GREY.

On me ! impossible.

EDWARD.

On you, and none but you.——Your spring, my
 princess,

From that illustrious hero of our house,
Who, when the tyrant crook'd back Richard fell,
Together twin'd the white rose and the red,
And, in his royal person, happ'ly join'd
The jarring rights of Lancaster and York.
Bow then, my lords, and hail our cousin, queen.

GREY.

Do not fall down ;—the honours, which the king
Would to my hand commit, heav'n's justice meant
Never for me ; and would, in punishment,
Should I accept the crown,—pour on my head
All his dread wrath ;—for daily, and by night,
Painful reflection must a sister's name
Bring to my mind, on whose anointed head
I had done sacrilege.——Alas ! my lord,
If royal Mary be in league with Rome,
And so, incapable of empire here,
Seek out some worthier champion to supply
The place she cannot fill, nor on my head
Repose such honours.——Wrong me not so far,
As to expose me to all eyes,——a wretch

20 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Advanc'd above my people,——to be made
The public mark of scorn.

EDWARD.

By heav'n, I swear
Thy virtue goes too far, and 'tis thy fears
Which image out the present face of things,
Not as they are ; so, in a summer's day,
If the loud tempest blow, fair nature seems
Turning to chaos :——the late curling brook,
Now by the whirlwind ruffled and plough'd up,
Shews ev'ry beauty of the landscape round,
Broken, uncouth, and dreary to the eye ;
Whilst all aghast, the traveller hastes along,
To gain his distant inn : but when the winds,
Lull'd by the hand that rais'd them, sink to peace,
In the smooth mirror, a reflected scene
Of beauty,—rising upon beauty,—shines,
And drooping nature once again looks gay.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

If,—by thy fears deterr'd,—thou wave this crown,
Yet think of England, and the gift accept ;
Whilst I,—to influence thy choice,—suppose
The worst that may befall us.——Think you see,
But heav'n, in mercy, keep us from that sight,
The king, our friend and father, dead before you :
Let then, imagination picture Mary
Succeeding to his honours.——Oh ! what then
Shall be the scene !——Your pardon, royal sir,
My heart is warm'd with gen'rous indignation,
And I must speak.——Then liberty, farewell :

England

NORTHUMBERLAND. 21

England no more shall lift her tow'ring head,
 Proud of the blessings heav'n has lavish'd on her !
 Proud of her empire o'er the watry world,
 Round her once happy coasts !——Nor is this all ;
 For, to compleat the measure of our woes,
 Once more our church shall groan beneath the
 scourge
 Of superstitious priests, who, locust like,—
 Where'er they wheel their pestilential flight,—
 Spread universal ruin.

GREY.

Oh no more !
 Thy words, as with a dagger, pierce my breast,
 Reaching the seat of life.

SUFFOLK.

And shall thy heart,
 Which but the mention of expected ills
 So instantly can wound, be lost to pity !
 Shall it not rather teach thee to stand forth,
 And be our queen ?—Already, Mary forms
 Her hopes of empire, and our church's ruin,
 Whilst thou, in whom heav'n lodges her defence,
 Doubt'st of thy right to save !

EDWARD.

It shall not be ;
 In this I will command ;—bow, therefore, lords,
 And one and all repeat,—God save the queen.

ALL.

Upon our knees, long prosper heav'n, your reign.

22 NORTHUMBERLAND.

GREY.

What shall I say?---but I consent in all
To my unhappy fate ;---and take this crown,
Not eager to possess the name of queen ;
But as a gift, since so my sov'reign wills,
I must no more refuse.---Yet, think of this ;---
If anarchy and strife, by heav'n's decree,
Visit the land, that she who wish'd to save,
Fail'd only in the pow'r.

EDWARD.

He that confers,
Not always, the glad palm of victory,
Upon the stronger party, or the race,
Gives to the swift, shall in a cause so just,
With his own fortitude inspire thy heart,
All dangers to repel.----Let then thy fears,
Banish'd, give place : whilst I,---what's left of life,
Henceforth employ between my soul and heav'n ;
For surely, death's at hand.----I feel, I feel,
His icy finger, stagnate in my veins
The trembling stream of life.----Oh ! come away,
My soul's impatient to resign her clay.

A C T

A C T II.

SCENE I. *Hoddeson in Hertfordshire.*

MARY. BEAUFORT.

MARY.

YOU tell me wonders, fir.

BEAUFORT.

Yet no less true
Is the advice I bring.—Since Edward's death,
The council are lock'd up within the tow'r,
Under pretence of safety to the state;
But those, who can divine the certain cause,
Say 'tis old Dudley's craft, to hold the lords
As pris'ners in his eye,—so to prevent
What such as wish *you* well,—might undertake
Against the cause of lady Jane his daughter.

MARY.

His daughter, did you say?

BEAUFORT.

I did,—for scarce
Two hours were pass'd when first I got to horse,
As, from my lord of Arundel I learn'd,
To whom, the duke, for special purposes
Not difficult to guess, stands all unlock'd,

24 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Since Guildford Dudley, at his father's instance,
Receiv'd her hand, and was espous'd unto her.

MARY.

Married!—espous'd!—Oh hastiness! to pass
Upon my brother's coffin, to a bed
Indecent as unjust!—My danger now,
Too plainly I foresee.

BEAUFORT.

But, madam, you
We trust, have nought to fear:—your friends are
many,
Who will, in time, do much.—This stratagem,
Of our deep plotting duke, should rather wake
Your pity than your dread;—for he is push'd
Close to the brink of his expiring pow'r,
Which to stretch out,——spent swimmer like,——
whose life
Is precious to him still;—of the weak twig,
Depending from the bank, with greedy hand
Will he catch hold, though but to pluck it up,
So desperate is his case.

MARY.

'Tis judg'd no less;
But thus forewarn'd, I will to Norfolk straight,
And there invite the nobles of the land
To join my cause, and place me on the throne,
From which, my brother in despite has shut me;
If this should fail, my last resource will be,
To ship myself with privacy and haste,
And cross the seas for France; since, tarrying here,
Would

Would but my preservation serve to make
 Unsettled, as the bark by tempests tost,
 Whilst I had half an hour of life and breath
 To breed revolt ; and nothing but my blood
 Would stop the clam'rous throat of discontent.—
 Go you before ; I will dismiss you straight
 With letters for my lord, whose zealous love,
 Together with your labour, claim my thanks.

S C E N E II. *The palace.*

GUILDFORD. GREY.

GUILDFORD.

Ever in tears !——Oh ! stay this flood of anguish ;
 Thy piety has paid what friendship ask'd,
 And Edward needs no more. The dews, that fall
 On virtue's bier, are register'd above
 A grateful sacrifice :——but, to persist
 In obstinate and unavailing grief,
 Offends th' eternal will.——Alas, my queen !
 Why dost thou weep ?——thy Edward is in bliss,
 Where,—splendid as the stars of heav'n,—he shines,
 And, with a just contempt, looks down on kings.

GREY.

My Guildford, yes :——the suff'ring faint is crown'd
 With endless glory and eternal peace ;
 Therefore, the tears his wond'rous goodness claim'd,

No

26 NORTHUMBERLAND.

No more lamenting for a hopeless loss,—
I bury'd in his grave.

GUILDFORD.

What do I hear!—

Oh! yet recall those words:—If Edward's death
Occasion not the waste of all these tears,
The fatal cause, my boding soul foretels,
For ever must exist.—Now, on the day
That Hymen, with her sacred torch, should light
My eager footing to immediate bliss;
To be debarr'd,—even then, from hope cast off,
And plung'd into despair!—the road of life,
Which, vainly, I suppos'd o'erspread with flow'rs,
Snatch'd from my view, 'ere yet I trod the path ↓
Is it not grief on grief?—much,—much beyond
The tortures of the damn'd.

GREY.

For pity's sake,

Why talk'st thou to me thus?

GUILDFORD.

Oh cruel fate!—

Have I deserv'd these pains?—Why, on the day
That should confirm the fulness of my joys,
And make me bless'd indeed, hast thou contriv'd
To swell those eyes with tears,—that breast with
fighs,—

Which, from my heart, are answer'd back with
blood.

GREY.

GREY.

Oh thou unkind one!—how have I deserv'd
 The least rebuke from thee?—May heav'n attest,
 And punish the assertions of my love,
 If they are falsely spoke:—There is on earth
 No object worth my care, save thee,—the lord
 Of all my soul's desires.—Bear then awhile
 The weakness of my heart, and whilst I strive
 To stay these tears that cloud our wedding morn,
 Mingle not with my griefs;—but of the joys,
 Attendant on the thought, that love first made
 This bosom thine, and shall confirm it so,
 Through all the uncertain labyrinths of life;—
 Unboundedly partake.

GUILDFORD.

Thou angel softness!
 That art too good,—much, much too good indeed,
 To waste a moment's thought on one like me;
 Forgive th' impatient transports of my passion,
 And teach me how I may deserve thy love.—
 Give me my queen,—oh! give me thy affliction;
 I'll wear thy sorrows nearest to my heart,
 And bathe my footsteps in a stream of tears,
 And make the winds but echoes of my sighs,
 And join the nightingale's complaints to mine,
 Reciting the sad story of our love
 All the night long, nor shall these tears pollute
 The lustre of thy crown.

GREY.

GREY.

There,—there, my lord,
 You probe my wound indeed!—there lies the
 source,
 Th' exhaustless source, whence all my sorrows flow!
 The wreath of royalty, that binds my temples,
 Is lin'd with thorns that pierce into my brain,
 And sting that precious sense:—I hold a crown
 Which heav'n would have withheld, and reign
 a queen,
 Without a queen's command.—Alas! my Guild-
 ford,
 To sacrifice the peace of private life,
 Where ev'ry thing was ease,—for this sad state,
 Uncertain as the footing of the waves,
 Is't not a piteous change!

GUILDFORD.

Alas! my queen;
 Bid to these causeless fears, a long farewell:
 What, can thy fate assign thee for affliction,
 Exalted as thou art upon a throne?—

[an officer enters.]

OFFICER.

Madam, the guard.

GREY.

I come;—oh Guildford, Guildford!
 Why must I to the tow'r?—Ill fated place!
 Upon whose threshold, who, once puts his foot,
 Hears, or conceives he hears, the bird of night
 Croak,

NORTHUMBERLAND. 29

Croak, in hoarse cadence, his approaching fate !
 There, the sixth Henry fell by cruel Gloster,
 There too, young Edward and his brother York,
 Found an untimely grave.

GUILDFORD.

Safe in the tow'r

This morning, with the soonest, have the lords
 Decreed to meet, and, jointly with thy aid,
 Support the feeble state ;——nor do you go,
 As one who dreads a danger unforeseen ;
 But like your royal cousin, who sojourn'd
 There till his coronation.——For such foes,
 As gather in our kingdom's distant skirts,
 But as light vapours in a summer's sky ;——
 Their enterprizes scorn.——My warlike fire,
 Whose sword was never yet employ'd in vain,
 His self again refits to fight thy cause.——
 Conquest, that seems enamour'd of his arm,
 Shall to its cavern drive rebellion home,
 And bring thee back, with victory and joy.

SCENE III. *A council room in the Tower.*

NORTHUMBERLAND. SUFFOLK. HUNTINGDON.
 NORTHAMPTON. ARUNDEL. CHENEY,
 and OTHERS of the council.

[*The LIEUTENANT attending.*]

NORTHUMBERLAND.

In right good time we meet, to fix on means
 Of greatest safety for the gen'ral weal ;——

So,

30 NORTHUMBERLAND.

So, to support the weak afflicted state ;——
And, with our lives, defend our lawful sov'reign,
The royal lady Grey.

SUFFOLK.

Good heav'n assist us,
And, to the wisdom of this careful council,
Point out the means that may be safely us'd
In our so great distrefs.——For me,—perhaps,
It is the coldness of my blood that forms
The phantom which I fear ;---and yet, my lords,
It were in vain to bid my age be safe :
The noble earls of Bath, and gallant Suffex,
Sir Walter Drury, and Sir Henry Bedingfield,
Or our reports speak false, already ris'n,
Declare themselves our foes.

HUNTINGDON.

In Suffolk too,
Riot is up, and the revolting herd,
That can change sides, abandon or befriend,
As fortune smiles or frowns,---to Mary fly :
And post, succeeding post, from ev'ry part
Brings black accounts of her increasing pow'r,
Which should be check'd in time ; e'er yet it
 swells
Beyond our opposition.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Perish all
Her tow'ring views ; and let us rather hope,
That by the mutual and unwearied labours,
Of our magnanimous and noble friends,
Whose

NORTHUMBERLAND. 31

Whose zeal, for England's good, we must not
doubt,

Our native country shall remain unshaken,
Spite of the poor endeavours of her foes,
And lay the arm of crush'd rebellion low.

NORTHAMPTON.

The badness of the cause by those who fear,
Sufficiently is shewn: and such, to day,
Appears in Mary's flight;—for, noble lords,
Th' intelligence is true, that, meaf'ring back,
The journey she had made with hastier strides;
At Hodd'sdon, her precipitate retreat,
With joy she undertook; and Norfolk soon,
The fugitive will hide, where, soon or late,
She, and her feeble party, must be crush'd.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

In that I hope; nor should we idly judge
The wise intentions of all-seeing heav'n:
My noble brother, cheer your heart once more,
Nor, to these wasting cares, devote your age:
Think—that kind providence ordain'd the union,
Which the descending sun, last night saw finish'd,
As a fair epocha in future annals;
Counting from whence, our children's latest chil-
dren,—

Turning the page,—shall read what various blef-
sings

Heav'n on the land has pour'd.

SUFFOLK.

My lords, I've finish'd.

HUN-

HUNTINGDON.

Why fit we then in consult vain, debating,
 Yet unresolv'd, the means to save the realm,
 When, like a hag,—her dread approach,—fierce
 war

Makes to our thresholds.—Shame upon us all!
 Whilst we thus negligent dispute it here,
 Treason, that till to day abhorr'd the light,
 Walking abroad in absence of the sun,
 Stalks from her cave unmask'd, and boldly dares
 To shew her swarthy countenance at noon.

NORTHAMPTON.

This comes of Edward's over gentle sway,
 And tame connivance at infracted law :
 The commonalty, suffer'd long to range
 Licentious as they pleas'd, whilst law hung up,
 But as a rod, an idle implement,
 Intended to fright babes,—now insolent,
 Refuse to be controul'd ; nor, will they know
 We have the spirit to suppress their license,
 Till, by experience taught, they find the sceptre
 In the queen's hand, no pageant for derision,
 But made of stubborn steel.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Mean time my lords
 I hold it certain that lord bishop Gard'ner,
 With superstitious Bonner, join'd and aided
 By many more of note and great authority,
 Do secretly contrive, conceive and practise,

In concert with the prince's Mary's spies,
Most traiterous designs against the state:
Are busy medlers, and presume to question
The title of the queen:—be it your care,
Good Sir John Bligh, to have their steps observ'd,
For they are bosom vipers, and, once cherish'd,
Will lay their venom deep.

LIEUTENANT.

Your grace's will,
With most partic'lar note, shall be obey'd.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

And now, to guard against remoter foes.—
My lord of Suffolk, you, the council name
Defender of the Tow'r.—With all due haste,
Sir Edward Hastings, post towards the East.
And in the queen's name,—as you pass along,—
For our assistance levy new recruits:—
With best advantage portion out your strength,
And march to meet me suddenly at Cambridge.—
Sir Thomas Jerningham, to you, is given
Chief disposition and command at sea;
With all the speed you can, equip the fleet,
And shape your way toward the Suffolk coast,
So to prevent the trait'ers' flight by sea,
Should she intend that step.—The forces,—rais'd
Already for this enterprize,—myself
Will personally head.—My lords, Northampton,
Huntingdon, Bentley, Warwick, and the rest,
We'll instantly away.

D

HUN-

HUNTINGDON.

Our force is ready.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

And now, in God's great name, my noble brethren,

Let us resolve, as from my soul I do,
 All that we hold most dear, ev'n life it's self,
 To hazard in th' atchievement that demands
 The service of our swords ; for, so may heav'n
 To disappointment and defeat, consign
 The fortunes of the queen,—since yesterday,
 Allied to me in blood,——when I desert
 This necessary war, 'ere tyranny,——
 For tyranny will come in Mary's train,——
 Lie stretch'd below ; a trunk without a soul.——
 Our cause shall draw success from heav'n upon it,
 Whilst he, who falls, shall purchase death with
 honour.——

You, that remain at home to guide our councils,
 Do it with harmony ;—for you,—the heart
 And vitals of the body politic,——
 Will make that labour vain, which is employ'd
 To heal the wounded limbs,—and that's our task,—
 By jars and quarrels here.——If you regard
 The preservation of your country's peace,
 Let private griefs to public welfare yield,
 Peace all at home ; war, only in the field.

ARUN-

ARUNDEL. CHENEY.

CHENEY.

Hear'd you the duke, my lord?

ARUNDEL.

Sir Thomas, yes;

But I believe him not.

CHENEY.

Believe him not!

And dares the pris'ner then, arraign the hand
That locks him to his rest?

ARUNDEL.

'Tis true, indeed,

We are his pris'ners now, but there's good hope,
Our bonds are not eternal.—Come;—I see
That you survey me with distrustful eyes,
Because you know me not:—in plainness,
therefore,

Learn that I hate the duke, and would do much
To prove, how true I speak.

CHENEY.

Do you pronounce

Sincerely what I hear?—Give me your hand;
And, in exchange, take mine;—the hand of him,
Who, in abhorrence to the Dudley's race,
Will go as far as you; nay, strive as one
Contending in a race, to conquer too.

ARUNDEL.

But who is this comes here?

CHENEY.

We know him well;
Our ever valu'd friend, lord Winchester.

ARUNDEL. CHENEY. GARDINER.

GARDINER.

Hail to your lordship.—If I rightly guess,
We here have none but friends?

ARUNDEL.

Yes, rev'rend lord,
Here, in the cause of majesty usurp'd,
Do we stand,——'list'd both.

GARDINER.

And nothing doubt,
But that our Mary's ever gracious hands
Shall give you full revenge on all your foes.
You've long, with rods of iron been oppress'd
By Edward, when he liv'd; and Dudley, now
Is meditating chains to bind you still.—
Do you, my lord of Arundel, forget
How he accus'd you in the house of commons,
Touching high crimes, and charg'd you with
embezzling
The rents and revenues of certain lands,
For which, and your redemption, you were forc'd
To pay large fines, and waste your wealth upon
'em?

ARUN-

ARUNDEL.

Forget it!—no;—and to convince you more
Of my desire,—with int'rest, to return
The debt, in which I'm bound;—hear what I've
done.—

Some short time past, Northumberland, who meant
To win my love by shews of confidence,—
Forseeing well it might become of use,—
Told me, that Edward's death should rest con-
ceal'd,

Left Mary,—summon'd to attend her brother,—
Might gain the intelligence, and so turn back,
Preventing what they 'ad plann'd; for, in the
council,

By Suffolk, other traitors, and his self,
'Twas secretly resolv'd to seize her person
The moment she arriv'd.—But, thus forewarn'd,
With diligence I privately went forth,
And sent a trusty friend, with my advice,
To Hodd'sdon, where her majesty then lay.
In fine, 'twas this occasion'd her retreat;
Since which, I hear that numbers join her cause,
And, in the towns and cities which they pass,
Display their ensigns, and proclaim her, queen.

GARDINER.

That you may know how dearly she is held,
By many here at home, I have to tell you;
Though, for long time, they've kept me here a
pris'ner,

Yet, have I mis'd no means of private conf'rence
 With divers of our friends ;—the duke of Norfolk,
 Lord Thomas Howard, and Sir Edward Paget,
 Finding them all inclin'd as we could wish.

CHENEY.

With us, there are ten thousand, and ten thousand,
 Ripe for revolt ; who would, upon the instant,
 Join in our cause.

ARUNDEL.

The late protector's fate,
 If well and timely urg'd, might many hearts
 Win to our side, for he was truly lov'd ;
 And those, that were his friends, would gladly
 seize

The occasion when held out.—Now,—were it but
 A possible attempt, to sway some few
 Of those that form the council, to appear
 And head the discontented in the field ;
 Much would be done in that.

CHENEY.

I think so too.

But for the means ?——Pent up, as here we are,
 How may a way be found, to meet and raise
 The faction of our friends ?——Suffolk has eyes,
 And we are closely watch'd.—Should he suspect
 The drift of our designs, he will prevent ;
 Whereto, no doubt, the duke has well advis'd him,
 What elsewise, might be plann'd.

GARDINER.

By heav'n, my friends,
 The luckiest incident presents it's self,
 Of any you could wish!—The French ambassador,
 Who, as you know, is by his court empow'r'd,
 To treat of the demanded aids from France,
 Seems much averse, or I am ill inform'd,
 To do it in the Tow'r:—now, could not you,
 Or others of the lords, persuade the governor,
 That it were well, whereto your country's service,
 And the state's exigence, shall be as motives:
 That it were well, I say, to give him audience
 At Baynard's castle, or at Sion house,
 Or any where your wisdoms may think meet;
 Then,—seizing that occasion,—there, confer
 Upon the means of doing Mary right;
 Invite her here, and place her on the throne.

CHENEY.

This project wears a face.

ARUNDEL.

And I myself,
 Know that the duke of Suffolk's temper's such,
 His easy nature will with ease be brought
 To grant us our request.

GARDINER.

Mean while, let one,
 If so I may intrude with my advice,
 Enquire the envoy out, suggesting to him
 Reasons, why here he should not meet the council.

ARUNDEL.

Good ;---what they are, no matter :---but on this
Place we great stress ;----our freedom of debate
Here is debarr'd us, and——

GARDINER.

Go to ;——the sequel
Comes of it's self :——a good disciple are you ;
So are ye both.

CHENEY.

To cut off useles conf'rence,
This will we do, and prosp'rous be the issue.

GARDINER.

Then hie we hence to some remoter part,
Where, unobserv'd by Suffolk or his spies,
We may discourse at large.

CHENEY.

After your rev'rence.

A C T III.

S C E N E I. *Bury St. Edmunds.*

NORTHUMBERLAND. HUNTINGDON. NORTHAMPTON. WARWICK, *and* OTHERS.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

MARCH higher to the plain, then give the word

Halt, and repose till morn.—What cheer, my lords?—

A heavy melancholy sits upon you,
Weighing your spirits down. The toilsome way
Has, doubtless, made you sad.

HUNTINGDON.

Not so, my lord :
We want more friends to greet us here at Bury.
A gen'ral murmur has possess'd our troops,
And much we doubt success.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Groundless the fears,
That, in a righteous cause like ours, spring up,
Blighting the blossom of our enterprize.
What though our army, onward as we march'd,
Shrunk from our side, still are we strong enough,
Aided above, to beat rebellion back.

HUN-

HUNTINGDON..

Heav'n, prove thou better to us than my fears.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Early to-morrow as the breaking day,
 March we for Cambridge, whither, valiant Hastings,
 Furnish'd with aids to reinforce our troops,
 Will soon begin his march.—What therefore rests
 Is, that to London, forthwith we dispatch
 Some officer of credit, that may urge
 The council for supplies; and you, lord Gray,
 Shall, for this purpose, instantly set out:
 Come,—in we gentlemen to pass the night,
 And you,—my son of Warwick,—'ere the dawn,
 Call at my tent :——we must be early up.
 But, more than all, place careful guards about
 Th' approaches to the camp; and so good night.

NORTHAMPTON.

Good night, and soft repose attend your grace.

S C E N E II. *Baynard's castle.*

ARUNDEL. CHENEY. GUILDFORD. and OTHERS
 of the council.

GUILDFORD.

According as you wish'd,——we now are met
 At Baynard's castle, to confer in full,

Of

Of what concerns the state.—I marvel much,
His excellence is not already come.

[*an officer enters.*]

OFFICER.

My lords,—th' ambassador is now arriv'd.

GUILDFORD.

Admit him instantly.

ARUNDEL.

Stay, officer,

We are not yet resolv'd.

GUILDFORD.

Resolv'd, my lord!

Is this a time then, to be idly spent
On foolish points of form?—The time runs by,
And what we have in charge demands all haste;
Therefore I humbly move, that we proceed
Upon the state affairs.

CHENEY.

I move so too.

GUILDFORD.

And let it ne'er be said, that whom you rais'd
To empire,—you neglected to defend,
When iron handed war began to threat
The safety of her throne.—I have at heart
The honour of the realm; and, must beseech,
The duty which I owe her majesty,
May, in this honour'd circle, find no breast,
Whose loyalty and zeal come short of mine.

CHE-

44 NORTHUMBERLAND.

CHENEY.

Who, at our want of loyalty would cast
The stone of punishment, must prove unkind,
To call the deed no worse :—ev'n you, my lord,
Of this shall be convinc'd.—When Edward died,
We made your wife a queen ; and,—to omit
All else we have perform'd for her defence,——
By our consenting voice and only ours,
Northumberland's in arms.

GUILDFORD.

But how supplied ?

The means of his defence scarce weighing more
With the opposing pow'r, than Lichas' strength
To Hercules' compar'd.—If it be so,
Boast not, for shame, you sent him out to fight
For England's welfare, and our sov'reign's safety ;
But rather say, upon an enterprize
So hazardous, that with the words “ go forth,”
His ruin was pronounc'd, and he set out,
A sacrifice in form ;—a victim,—doom'd
To the none pitying war.

ARUNDEL.

Come,—come,—no more ;

Thy father is a traitor.

GUILDFORD.

How !

ARUNDEL.

I say

A traitor once again.—Thou understand'st
The meaning of that word.—Who side with me ?

CHE-

CHENEY.

Myself and all of us.—We say a traitor,
Leagu'd with his son and daughter to destroy us.

GUILDFORD.

Away,—away,—your dare not for your lives
Pronounce this to his beard; but, b'ing thus
absent,

I grant,—you may be bold, and safely brave it.

ARUNDEL.

But that I hold him forfeit to the laws,
His life not *his* to risque,—I would defy
The traitor to his teeth.

CHENEY.

So I,—so all.

GUILDFORD.

And in return——

ALL.

Away with him to pris'n,
Let him not speak.

ARUNDEL.

What, ho,—a guard without,
And see the doors be shut, that no one cause
Th' alarm to reach the Tow'r. [*a guard comes in.*]

Lord Guildford, hear
The substance of your charge.—You have con-
spir'd

With a usurping hand, against the grace
Of your true queen, for which, till Mary's will
Be known in the affair, we here commit you

Into

46 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Into safe ward.—Lay hands upon, and guard
The traitor, as you'll answer for his flight,
And, for the present, take him to your care
'Till warrants are made out, that shall assign
His body to the Tow'r.—Away at once.

GUILDFORD.

Yet give me leave to speak, 'ere I depart.—
Lord Arundel and you, that thus conspire
Against your country's peace ;—the time will come,
When angry heav'n shall make you weep in blood,
For what you do to day.—Remember, sirs,—
And think not my *own* fears extort the words ;—
Whose prophecy it is ;—and, cruel men,
Whate'er you do to me ; for I perceive
My death's already sure ; some pity take
On her, in whom 'tis guilt enough, to be
My absent father's child.—If you devise
An equal fate for her ;—upon your hearts,
Lay, each of you, his hand, and answer this ;—
Who, to the main sea, thrust her boat adrift,
When, with glad heart, she would have staid on
shore ;

Nor, to the ocean, but reluctant, gave
The vessel of her peace ?—Oh ! think of this,
And her, you *made* a queen.—I charge you all,
Seek not to prove a trait'ers by that deed,
Left,—when in times to come, the punishment
Fall on your heads,—heav'n force you to confess,
That hapless Guildford did, for once, speak true.

[*he departs guarded.*]

ARUN-

ARUNDEL.

Sir Thomas Cheney, you shall first with us.—
Our ceremony done,—post to the tow'r,
And to old Suffolk say, on pain of death,
That he attend upon the council straight,
Assembled at this place :—what's proper else,
Is to your prudence left.—

CHENEY.

Doubt not !—I go.

ARUNDEL.

And we, before you part, will to the cross,
Proclaiming there the queen ; that done, we meet
Here at this place again.—Set on ;—the time
Demands our utmost haste.—Long life and
health

To Mary, our liege queen.

ALL.

And to her foes,
Gibbets and axes !—infamy and death !

SCENE III. *Framlingham castle.*

MARY. SUSSEX. and OTHERS.

MARY.

Thus far do hopes attend upon our cause,
Through your consenting zeal.—Inform me, sirs,
Does

48 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Does not the sceptre now,—so long withheld
From the true heirefs,—my acceptance court,
And seem to wish me queen.

SUSSEX.

It does, my liege,
And ev'ry eye and heart upon you turn,
As saying thus;—"Come, royal Mary, come,
And free us from a tyrant, that would place
His foot upon our necks."

MARY.

And, in good time,
When I am seated on the throne I seek,
Will I fulfil their wish.—Since here I came,
By divers messengers, important news
Have reach'd your sov'reign's ear.—The lords
of council,

Bearing Northumberland the deadliest hate,
Stay only for the sanction of occasion,
To act against him, and declare for us.

SUSSEX.

Your highness has obtain'd unlook'd for hap.
The men of Suffolk,—and of those, no few,—
First rose in arms, and join'd your sacred cause:
Warm'd by whose zeal, and animated high,
To merit at your royal highness' hands,
In ev'ry part the nobles own your claims.

MARY.

Is't known, my lords, where Dudley now encamps,
And what his numbers are?

SUSSEX.

SUSSEX.

At Bury field,

Most gracious lady, lay the traitor laft,
 Scarce thirteen thousand ftrong.—His troops
 made up

Of fuch, as from their prifon chains fet free,
 Have under his rebellious banners lifted,
 By desperate adventures, to atchieve
 Their own deftruction; and—ftill more to make
 This petty force, an object but of fcorn,—
 Defertion stalks, like a difeafe, amongst them,
 Thinning their ranks fo faft, that 'twere a pity
 We, with our hoft, fhould fright them to an ague;
 As we muft do, by coming but upon them.

MESSENGER *entering*.

My gracious lady, and you valiant peers,
 As on the fouthern angle of the port
 I held my watch, anon, methought appear'd
 A diftant fleet, and near as it approach'd,
 Six fhips, and thofe of battle, I fumm'd up,
 That now, with all their fails, are bearing down
 Upon the harbour here.

MARY.

Unlook'd for news!

How fay you, lords? or what do you fuppose?
 Means it mifchance, or fortune, to our caufe?

SUSSEX.

We know not which, yet hope we for the beft.

E

MARY.

MARY.

They give this salutation to the fort,
And come, I think, as friends.

MESSENGER.

I have more news.

SUSSEX.

Impart it then with speed.

MESSENGER.

As here I came,
With that, which I have told,—a post I met,
Who, with fatigue o'erspent, had stopp'd to
breathe,
The beast on which he rode ;—from him I learn'd,
That at the instant I am speaking this,
Sir William Williams, whom, an half hour's ride,
He scarce had left behind, is on his march,
Bringing along a well selected force
Of fifteen hundred soldiers,—rais'd in Wales,
And by his self equipp'd,—to join you here.—
And hark ;—methinks I hear his distant drum.

MARY.

'Tis so :—thy welcome words rejoice our hearts.
Lords, go we in, and let it be our care
To give reception to the worthy knight,
And thank him for his loyalty and love.

S C E N E

SCENE IV. *A room within the Tower,
the gates being shut.*

CHENEY and the MOB without.

FIRST MOB.

What ho!—lieutenant.—Who stands guard
within?

Bear back a little, goodman Humphrey Gubbins,
And leave the gate way free.—Bear back I say.

SECOND MOB.

Room for Sir Thomas there.—What,—ho!—
within!

Open the gates, lieutenant, and admit us.

[*Enter lieutenant.*]

LIEUTENANT.

Who calls “lieutenant” there?

FIRST MOB:

Your friends.—Come down
And let us in.—Unlock, unlock we say.

LIEUTENANT.

Whence, and who are you? and what mean you
all,

Thus to demand admittance to the Tow’r?—
Answer these questions, or you come not in.

SECOND MOB.

Sir Thomas Cheney, from Saint Baynard’s castle.
With bus’ness for his grace, demands admittance.

CHENEY.

'Tis true, lieutenant, therefore let me in.

LIEUTENANT.

Sir Thomas, first dismiss the rabble with you,
And then ;—but not till then ;—shall you have
entrance.

CHENEY.

Thou knave ;—thou villain ;—where's the duke
of Suffolk ?

LIEUTENANT.

The duke, besure, will not approve this violence.

FIRST MOB.

Down with the duke !—We say, he shall come
in.

SECOND MOB.

Beat down the gate.

CHENEY.

Forbear awhile.—Lieutenant,
Be wise, and let us in, or else, this instant,
Will we assail the bridge, and make our entrance.

LIEUTENANT.

I know my duty well, and bid defiance.
To your worst threats.

SECOND MOB.

Beat down the gate I say.

FIRST MOB.

You strive in vain.—'Twere best to fire the
place.

LIEU-

LIEUTENANT.

Sir knight, have done.—You will alarm the queen.

MOB.

Down with the queen, and down with Guildford too.

Long live the princess Mary.

LIEUTENANT.

Ho!—who waits?

Go one of you within, and tell his lordship,
Treason is at the gates.—

CHENEY.

Thou wilt repent
This insolence of thine.—Farewel awhile,
Till we return again.

LIEUTENANT. SUFFOLK.

SUFFOLK.

Now what's the matter?

LIEUTENANT.

Is the queen safe, my lord?

SUFFOLK.

Safe!—wherefore ask you?

LIEUTENANT.

I've cause to fear the worst; for at the gate,
Just as you enter'd, stood Sir Thomas Cheney,
With a tumultuous rabble at his heels,
And, in the council's name, demanded entrance,

E 3

Which,

54 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Which,—as my duty bade me,—I refus'd,
Unless he came alone;—when, instantly,
They threaten'd to beat down the gate, or fire it,
And did, beside, most trait'rously cry out,
“Down with the queen, and down with Guildford
too.”

And 'tis but now, Sir Thomas led 'em off,
Wishing me well till he return'd again.

SUFFOLK,

Can this be possible!

LIEUTENANT,

Look out, my lord,
And satisfy yourself.—See how the people,
Gather'd in mobs upon the hill, together,
Toss up their caps!—A more than common
gladness,
Seems to possess them all.

SUFFOLK,

This looks not well.---
Would I foresaw the end.

SERVANT *entering*.

Retire, my lord,
'The postern gate is forc'd by a mad mob,
Who pour into the place,—Hark,---they ap-
proach.

MOB *within*.

Where is the duke of Suffolk?

SUFFOLK,

Haste lieutenant;
Look to the queen within.

MOB

MOB *within.*

This right hand passage
Leads to the duke's apartment.

CHENEY *within.*

Give me leave:
I'll venture in alone.—Wait you without;
And if I stamp my foot, then shew yourselves.

SUFFOLK. CHENEY.

CHENEY.

Good meeting to your grace.—From Baynard's
castle,

Where now the lords are solemnly conven'd,
On great designs, on matters of high moment,—

SUFFOLK.

Sir Thomas, spare your speech.—Your entrance
here,

As you have made it, and the rabble with you,
Tell me, you come no friend. Inform me therefore,
Briefly as words have pow'r to let you speak it,
What pressing business you are charg'd withal,
That can excuse the violence you've us'd,
In giving it our ear.

CHENEY.

Thus then in short.—
The city which, but now, I left behind,
Gives back its echoes to the gen'ral joy,
Crowning this happy day.—For, not long since,

56 NORTHUMBERLAND.

At Moorgate and St. Paul's,—the lords of council
Proclaim'd the lady Mary, queen of England.

SUFFOLK.

Queen did you say!—If royal Jane is queen,
Who shall presume to contradict her claim?

CHENEY.

That will each honest bosom of the land,
Who in his loyalty, laments to see
Her highness from the right, by justice hers,
Unlawfully shut out.—I know you'll say,
By Edward's will, the honours of the land
Devolv'd to lady Jane; but tell me this:—
Can kings bestow their kingdoms as they please?
And, with the gift, their people give away,
As I would do this ring?—The ring is mine;
'Twas purchas'd with my purse; but,—for the
people,
They are the gift of heav'n, and should be us'd,
As were the talents,—penn'd in sacred writ,—
By the good steward;—husbanded as things,
Giv'n by that hand, that could, and would recal
'em.

SUFFOLK.

I hear and wonder too;—yet, have a care;
For what, with boldness, now you put in practice,
May but pull down destruction on the heads
Of thousands yet unborn!—If Edward's crown,
By equity and law was Mary's right,
Nor could be plac'd upon another's head,

Why

Why did you swear, his legacy was valid,
And the queen's title good ?

CHENEY.

Short sighted man !
That saw'st not when those oaths were, at the altar,
Spoke with our tongue, we us'd a language dif-
f'ring
Wide from the heart ;—besides, by thus protest-
ing,
Still, we lay at the mercy of the duke,
Whose cunning 'twas ;—a trade, which best he
practis'd,---
In this last marriage of his son lord Guildford,
T' entail the crown upon a race of his,
And use th' authority which should support it,
In playing o'er the tyrant's part again,
Swaying our lives at will.

SUFFOLK.

What must we do ?

CHENEY.

Your daughter must no longer reign a queen,
But rest close pris'ner here.----Lord Guildford
too,
The partner of her crime, must share her fate ;—
So, my commission ends ;---and for yourself,
The lords at Baynard's castle wait your coming,
There to subscribe to certain articles,
Touching the new made queen :---and these, they
look,
In all obedience, to be well perform'd.

SUF-

SUFFOLK. *Alone.*

I am commanded to approve the deed,
 That brings destruction with it.---Oh, my fears !
 The fatal day,—I dreaded long,—is come ;
 And now, at last, the pride of Dudley falls,
 With ruin on our heads.----But oh, my child !
 Whom,---when I blindly set thee up aloft,
 Above the state which heav'n allotted for thee,—
 My folly then undid ;---how wilt thou learn
 Thy mis'ry to endure ?----Out, fortune, out !
 That,---like a harlot, whose exterior charms,
 Catch the pleas'd gazer, but whose touch conveys
 Disease into the blood,---hast so beguil'd
 Our too confiding hopes !---Look, where she comes.

SUFFOLK. GREY. ATTENDANTS.

GREY *to her Attendants.*

Hence with the friendly flatt'ry of your love ;
 Hence with the name of majesty, which heav'n
 Frowns to hear nam'd :—and see, my gentle maids,
 See where he stands,—the fountain of my life,—
 Fix'd on the earth, some dreadful tale, no doubt,
 Lab'ring for utterance.---[*to Suffolk.*] Wherefore
 turn you from me ?----
 Why is that sigh ?

SUFFOLK.

I cannot,---cannot speak.

GREY.

Nor do you need.---The tumult that, but now,
 Frighten'd my ear, has made me apprehend

The

The utmost of my fate ; and now, thou turn'st,
Meeting my eyes with thine, I read it penn'd
Upon thy countenance, at large describ'd,
In character as legible and plain,
As the dread writing on Belsazzar's wall.

SUFFOLK.

What read'st thou there ?

GREY.

That I'm no more a queen.

SUFFOLK.

Thy guess is but too true.----The faithless lords,
Who, fool as I have been, by my consent,
Went out to meet this morning in the city,
Now side on Mary's cause.

GREY.

Unhappy news !

Though, for myself, my heart is fill'd with joy,
And were it not for thee, whom heav'n, perhaps,
May punish for my crime, I could rejoice,
As, when restor'd to liberty, the slave
Casts off the cruel chains which late he wore,
Since I have lost this crown.

SUFFOLK.

If thy distress

Fill not thy breast with sorrow for thyself,
Weep not for others' ills.

GREY.

Oh ! wherefore did I,

Blind to futurity, accept this crown,
Which heav'n ne'er meant as mine :--alas ! that deed,

Now

60 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Now rises to my soul, in all the forms
Which terror can put on.—A father's fate
Is certain as my own.—Oh homicide!
Weep, weep thyself to stone, for thou hast kill'd him,
And by thy crimes,—accursed wretch!—he dies.

SUFFOLK.

Thou must not fear for me.

GREY.

And where, good heav'n!
Where too is my dear lord!—Reflection, sleep
Upon that fatal question, nor reply
In words, that must the heart of pity seize
With horrible conceit.—Why, why should he
Participate the sentence of my fate,
Who did in nought participate my guilt?—
Oh save him heav'n!—nor in thy wrath forget
To mingle mercy.—Whatsoe'er thy will
Decrees for me,—spare, spare my lord, my Guildford.

SUFFOLK.

Heav'n will look down in pity on you both.

GREY.

Pity!—oh no.—I see him doom'd already.—
They bear him to the block.—Oh murder! murder!
Villain stand off,---nor dare to kill my husband.
He shall not die;—my blood shall be his ransom
For I have been his wife.---Hark, hark! he speaks--
Hear him upbraid me with the death he's led to.---
Oh!----from his eyes, what horrible displeasure
Flashes like light.-----Their beams consume my
bosom;

Look not so angrily upon a wretch,

Whose

NORTHUMBERLAND. 61

Whose ev'ry grief, at this distressful hour,
Ssprings from her love to thee.

SUFFOLK.

Kind heav'n allay
This tempest in her soul.

GREY.

Upbraids me, said I?
Curs'd be my tongue, that coin'd th' unhallow'd
falsehood :

For e'en the terrors of approaching death,
Plead all in vain, for one indignant look
To blast the fatal cause of his destruction :-----
Now, now he kneels ; and see the axe above him ;
Mercy !-----it falls-----turn, turn away my eyes ;
Nor let me view that manly face, besmear'd
With dust and blood ;---a spectacle of pity
And comely, though in death.

SUFFOLK.

Retire my child :
My heart weeps blood to see thee so transported.

GREY.

Why did he look so tenderly upon me ?
There---there I bleed indeed!---poor mangled shade,
'Twas I that murder'd thee, and in return
Thou thought'st of me in death !

SUFFOLK.

Oh misery !

GREY.

The murder'd thus to pity his destroyer !
Oh !---how that goodness wounds !-----'tis agony
Too

62 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Too grievous to be born.—But see they come !
 An eye-less train of spectres rise before me,
 Reeking with livid blood.—My injur'd lord,
 Poor ghost !—is with them too.—He waves
 me on ;

And thus I pay obedience.

SUFFOLK.

 Gently raise her,
 Lift her head softly.—She revives.—

GREY.

Where am I !

SUFFOLK.

In your own chamber ;---by your friends sur-
 rounded.

GREY.

Oh my distracted heart !

SUFFOLK.

 Thou dost transport
 Thy too distrusting breast with fancied fears,
 And speak, thou know'st not what.

GREY.

 I have, indeed,
 Too much indulg'd the frenzy of my brain,
 But will be henceforth calm.—The hand of
 heav'n,
 Who, by mysterious means, works out the lot
 Of our uncertain fate, best can divine
 How to restore my peace.

SUFFOLK.

SUFFOLK.

Virtue like thine,
 To the superior care of heav'n lays claim;
 Think but on that, my child, when griefs assail,
 And all things shall be well.—Softly conduct
 her.

GREY.

Righteous disposer of events, to thee
 See me bow down;—and, since by thy decree,
 Waking, I find life's golden vision o'er,
 State and a crown,—vain pageantry!—no more:
 In thy good mercy,—o'er my native land,
 Raise up some worthy champion to command:
 Long may he live, the sov'reign sway to bear,
 Freedom and faith his first, his only care;
 And, tho' a while, foul superstition reign, }
 Heav'n do thou break, in pity, break her chain, }
 And in firm righteousness the throne maintain.

A C T IV.

SCENE I. *The market-place at Cambridge.*

NORTHUMBERLAND. NORTHAMPTON. HUNTINGDON. WARWICK.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

HASTINGS with Mary! — Dighton, Cornwall, Howard,
And divers of our friends! — What can it mean?
Oh lords! — this news has struck me to the heart.
I have not words to tell you what I feel,
Nor moderation, proper to discern
What's fittest to be done.

HUNTINGDON.

I fear'd as much
As you can do, my lord, when yester night,
At Bury we arriv'd; and still, my thoughts
Preserve their selves the same: — but tho' the face
Of our affairs is clouded with a frown,
Still I resolve to keep the cause in hand,
That call'd us forth at first.

NOR-

NORTHUMBERLAND. 65

NORTHUMBERLAND.

That fortitude
Will hunt it's self to death, or fruitless fight,
Which combats against hope.——Who could have
thought

Upon a change like this !——Since yesterday,
Our strength is shrunk a half ; and now, arriv'd
At Cambridge, what's our welcome to a town,
We thought, was stor'd with friends !——

MESSENGER *entering*.

News, my good lords.

NORTHAMPTON.

Whence, and of what ?

MESSENGER.

From Yarmouth ; where the fleet,
Appointed by the lords to scour the coast
Of Suffolk, had put in :——briefly to speak ;
No sooner were they moor'd, but, in the night,
With one consent, the disaffected crews,
Rose on their leaders, and, impris'ning such
As seem'd not to approve of their intent,
Declar'd for Mary's cause, and steer'd to join her.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

And did the adm'ral then look tamely on,
Or join in the revolt ?

MESSENGER.

Alas, my lord !
Sir Thomas, with due care, they first secur'd
From hind'ring their intent ; since which, I hear,

F

See.

66 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Seeing all hope of liberty cut off,
He, by an oath, engag'd his loyalty
On the usurper's side.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Trait'rous and false!

MESSENGER.

Here comes another messenger with news,
Whom I outran just now.

SECOND MESSENGER *entering*.

Up and away,
For ev'ry minute, like a fruitful mother,
Teems with new woes.—The princess Mary, first,
Upward to London hath already march'd,
Private along; and, or report speaks false,
Must be, by this, arriv'd;—never till now,
So suddenly, and with such violence,
Came light'ning from the body of a cloud,
As doth the recreant capital pour forth
Her discontented crouds; added to which——

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Out with the worst.

SECOND MESSENGER.

The council at the tow'r,
Have,—in the absence of your grace,—proclaimed
Mary their queen, and Jane but a usurper.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Sayst thou?—the council too?—Is then old
Suffolk
False with the rest?—What horn is that?

SECOND

SECOND MESSENGER.

So please you,
If I mistake it not, the post from London.

HUNTINGDON.

He croaks the fatal entrance of more news.

THIRD MESSENGER *entering*.

Letters, my lords, dispatch'd exprefsly hither :
This for his grace, and these my lords for you :
The duke of Suffolk, and your friends salute you.

NORTHAMPTON.

'Ere I peruse the writing, prithee tell me,
How his grace fares ?

THIRD MESSENGER.

His letters will inform you.

WARWICK *to the Messenger*.

Hark you,—a word. *[they confer apart.]*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

How's this !—still more ill tidings !

Hear, and then judge yourselves, of all that
threats us.

[Reads.] “ Your grace shall understand, that
“ the council, having in your absence, ma-
“ turely considered the justice of the princess
“ Mary's claim to the throne of her deceas'd
“ brother, have determin'd to support her :
“ they have accordingly caused her to be
“ proclaimed here, and dispatch'd the earl of
“ Arundel, who is now personally with her,
“ in order to invite her royal highness to Lon-

68 NORTHUMBERLAND.

“ don ; in compliance of which dutiful re-
 “ quest, her arrival is shortly expected : you
 “ are therefore required, forthwith to disband
 “ your forces, and act, in every thing, as
 “ becomes a dutiful and loyal subject, where-
 “ upon we bid you a hearty farewell.”

HUNTINGDON.

My letters, like your grace's, do contain
 Most earnest conjurations from the lords,
 To quit the cause in which I'm now engag'd,
 And join them quick with my revolting pow'rs.

NORTHAMPTON.

To which same purpose, mine are also penn'd :
 That instantly, I should renounce all commerce
 With any of the traitors, as they call us ;
 And, if I mean to merit future grace,
 As fits my duty best, approve my faith,
 To Mary and her cause.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Here break we off ;
 And for the safety of his single person,
 Let each of us provide as best he's able ;
 For, since our honest labours have prov'd fruitless,
 'Tis prudence to submit.

NORTHAMPTON.

Submit, my lord !
 Submit to whom ?—Would you submit to Mary ?
 Give up your son, and basely leave the queen,
 To die with shame upon a public scaffold ?

NOR-

*NORTHUMBERLAND.

'Tis only by submission we can save 'em ;
All other means are lost.

NORTHAMPTON.

I grant they're forfeit,
If, through base fear,—with which, when souls
are seiz'd,
They lie entranc'd, like vermin that sleep out
The wintry season's space,—we let them pass us.
What should we dread ?——as yet, has nothing
happen'd.

HUNTINGDON.

Never believe that Mary can forget,
What maxims of the state may teach her now,
In prudence to forgive.——She may indeed,
Seemingly merciful,—your penitence
Take for your fault,—till opportunity
Happ'ly arrives, her veng'ance to make certain,
And your fate fully fix'd.

NORTHUMBERLAND. [*in all the confusion of fear.*]

Do you think so ?

HUNTINGDON.

I know 'tis so.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Have mercy on us, heav'n !
Our sins are now paid home !—What shall we do ?

NORTHAMPTON *aside to Huntingdon.*

You see this man ;——how suddenly he changes
With his pale fears.

70 NORTHUMBERLAND.

HUNTINGDON *aside to Northampton.*

I could not so have thought him,

NORTHAMPTON *aside as before.*

Let's touch him to the quick ; increase his fears ;
And afterwards, with openness upbraid him.

HUNTINGDON *still aside.*

I am content.

NORTHAMPTON.

And yet, when *I* reflect
On what must be our end ;—th' alternative
Is hard we have to chuse.—Mary is cruel,
Revengeful and implacable as hell ;
Should we then rashly venture to rely
On clemency ; no sooner shall our knees
Bend to her throne, but sick'ning at the sight,
She dooms us to the block.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Horrible thought !

HUNTINGDON.

What follows then if we reject her bounty,
Remaining still in arms ?—'Tis there, we perish,
As sure, if not as soon.—Our troops fall from us,
Melting like snows before the spring tide sun :
And when our all is gone, then comes the worst :
Death with disgrace, or ignominious life :
Like Belisarius, Rome's neglected chief,
Condemn'd to wander forth, and beg our bread
In public ways, forsaken and despis'd.

NOR-

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Despis'd indeed !

NORTHAMPTON.

And, on whatever side
For hope and life we turn, the view's o'ercast
With what, to our distress, cries out "despair :"
Mary's resentments, and our feeble efforts
To seek for aid in arms, are two sharp rocks,—
That, Scylla ;—this, Charybdis ;—between which
We are compell'd to fail ;—nor can we chuse,—
So desp'rate is the crisis of our fate,—
But shun the one to split upon the other.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I own, my lords, that what we have to hope,
Is shaded with despair ;—yet, were it not,—
Nor let us, like fool hardy men, embark
Our safety in a vessel that must sink,
'Ere we can reach the shore,—the better part
To err upon the safest side, and take
The mercy of the queen ?—What shall we gain
By doing otherwise ?—'Tis worth the hazard :
Submission may do much ; but to go on
In deadly opposition, must turn out
The certain means of bringing ruin down,
On those for whom you plead ;—and who can
say,
What would become of us ?

HUNTINGDON.

Aye ;—there's the thorn,
Probing thy side, and fest'ring in the wound ;—

72 NORTHUMBERLAND.

“What would become of us.”!—Correct thy speech.—

“What of thyself”?—Art thou,—art thou the man,
That, ’ere our setting forth, entreated’st heav’n
To quit the cause of Jane, when thou should’st
cease

To strike at tyranny!—Lo!—heav’n now quits
The fortunes of the queen, thou proving false
To that, which thou hast sworn.

NORTHAMPTON.

It was thy pride
And insolence;—for now, my tongue *will* speak,—
That drew us forth at first:—hadst thou, the land,
With over-bearing tyranny, not rul’d,
When Edward was a king, we might have staid
In safety all at home, whilst hapless Jane
Had fill’d her seat belov’d, nor fear’d to lose,
With the disputed crown, her head, that wears it.

HUNTINGDON.

Hence with thy fears.—Go fall at Mary’s feet;
Betray thy country, and forsake the queen;
Give up thy friends, associate with their foes,
And what beside thou wilt;—for, from this hour,
We leave thee to thy fate.—I’ll towards York.

NORTHAMPTON.

To Cornwall, I;—and till we meet again,
Lord Huntingdon, farewell.

HUNTINGDON.

Farewel, Northampton.

NOR-

NORTHUMBERLAND. WARWICK.

WARWICK.

Shall I entreat ~~them~~ back?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

For what, my son?

They do but court destruction on their selves,
And run into the toil they would avoid.
With ruin they're in love.

WARWICK.

Ha!—who comes here!

NORTHUMBERLAND. WARWICK. ARUNDEL.

SOLDIERS.

ARUNDEL.

Soldiers perform your charge, and feize 'em straight:
My lord Northumberland, and earl of Warwick,
I do arrest you jointly for high treason;
And, in pursuance to the queen's command,
Mean to convey you to the Tow'r of London,
As pris'ners in my care.—Bring 'em along.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What means this violence, my lord of Arundel?
We are queen Mary's friends.

ARUNDEL.

Her friends!—if so,

Why have I found you with an armed force,
Distant so far from where her service calls you?
Traitors, your fears alone proclaim you false.

NOR.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

And yet, what loyal subjects can do more,
 Than to tofs up their caps into the air,
 And cry, as now we do, "long live the queen." ?
 Repeat with me, my fon,——long live the queen.

ARUNDEL.

This will avail you nought.——Away with 'em.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Hear me, my lord.

ARUNDEL.

Peform your orders straight ;
 Bring 'em away.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

For ever,——ever lost !—
 Heav'n have thou mercy, and forgive our fins.

S C E N E II. *A room of state in the
 Tower.*

MARY. GARDINER. SUSSEX. CHENEY. and
 OTHERS.

MARY.

Here sit we now, with all due honours crown'd,
 Our sacred faith triumphant ; and its foes,
 Like the ripe corn, which tempests beat to earth,
 Enfeebled and brought low.——Long,——long with
 eyes

Dis-

Diffolv'd in bitter tears, our saints have seen
 Rome's holy church expiring on the ground :
 But heav'n, in pity to her sinking state,
 And ever studious to reward our zeal,
 Hath brought us on, victorious in the cause,
 That well deserv'd its aid.

GARDINER.

Already too,
 Have treason and rebellion met their fate ;
 Shame, rout and disappointment :—Lady Jane,
 Guildford, Arbuthnot, Palmer, and the rest,
 Brought to their trials, know the punishment
 Due to committed crimes ; and even old Dudley,
 Balk'd in his hopes, deserted and abandon'd,
 No more shall lead another traitor forth,
 To side with heretics against our church.

MARY.

Aye, in that word, my lord, you have summ'd up
 All I hold dear ; for heav'n can testify,
 That for the dazzling bauble of a crown,
 Came not your queen in arms, but to prevent
 The ruin of her church.

GARDINER.

Unnumber'd gifts,
 The least of them,—a blessing, shall that church
 Rain down on Mary's ever righteous head.---
 What then now rests, but, by your highness' leave,
 To set a sole mn day, with speed, apart,
 When sentence shall proceed on Dudley's head ;
 For long it cannot be, 'ere fortune throws him

Into

76 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Into your royal hands ; and death or bonds,
As to the rev'rend judges shall seem meet,
Be the award denounc'd upon his crimes.

CHENEY.

Mean time, my lords, I am to move the queen
In the behalf of Grey ; for I consult
The honour of her reign, and, for the world,—
So dearly do I hold her majesty,
Whose pardon for this freedom I implore ;——
I would not have it said, her throne is built
Upon a bloody base.

MARY.

Speak boldly on.

CHENEY.

For guilty though she is, that guiltiness,
In justice, should be laid to the account
Of him, on whose suggestion she usurp'd
The crown which late she wore.—If at the hand
Of my liege mistress I have ought deserv'd,
Let her but hear me now, and I accept,
With a glad heart, the mercy shewn to Jane,
Asking no other boon for what I've done.

MARY.

We are not slow to pay past services.

CHENEY.

Nor deaf to pity's cries.—Oh ! had you seen,
When, at the bar she stood before her judge,
How decent ! how compos'd ! how firm, yet meek !
She view'd the awful scene on ev'ry side her !
And, how resign'd to heav'n in her affliction,

She

She met her fate with fortitude, that charm'd
Whilst it astonish'd all ;—you had wept blood.

MARY.

Thy pious wish accept.—

CHENEY.

And can it be,
That I have thus found grace !—Oh ! let me then
Pursue my darling purpose, and intreat
That mercy stop not here.—

MARY.

Else should I be
Made up of cruel and unnat'ral love ;
Sparing the branch, but with a serpent's tooth
Sapping the trunk :—in briefness then, our mercy
Will we to Guildford and his wife extend,
Provided that they instantly embrace
The holy Roman faith.—All other terms
In this, we do remit.

CHENEY.

A noble bounty !

MARY.

Go then, lord Gard'ner, to the offending pair ;
Lay death and life alternately before 'em,
Mercy and justice :—freely let 'em chuse
The bitter or the sweet.

GARDINER.

I go my liege.—

[*Aside.*] Curse on this ill tim'd mercy !—I begin,
Already, to come short of my revenge.

MARY.

MARY.

What rests, we leave you to receive at leisure,
From noble Suffex.—He will straight inform you
What is our royal will.—Good day to all.

GARDINER. SUSSEX.

GARDINER.

Heav'n ;—my lord Suffex,—ever bless the princess,
For 'tis a peerless queen !

SUSSEX.

Right ;—noble Gardiner ;—
For,—to acquaint your lordship with the soonest,
How, and in what, by fortune you are favour'd,
Thus says the queen ;—“ To Winchester com-
“ mending,

“ What we esteem most dear ; the care and nurture

“ Of the true faith ;—our royal seal of Eng-

“ land

“ To the same hands we give, till greater honours

“ May with his merit weigh.”

GARDINER.

The church's blessings
Fall on her head ;—I am her lowest vassal.

SUSSEX.

So will I say, and for the present leave you ;—
Pardon my haste.—I must attend her highness.

GARDINER.

Thanks for this pains, that makes me too *your*
debtor.

GAR-

GARDINER. *Alone.*

The seal of England!—said not so lord Suffex,
 Or did myself but dream?—Ambition, oft
 Describes it's golden schemes upon the water,
 Or draws them in the dust,—expos'd and open
 To the first breeze, that blows them from remem-
 brance.

But 'tis not so with me;—for, in the rear
 Of that which I have born,—in Mary's train,—
 Pow'r comes at last, to bless my falling age
 Of disappointed hopes, which, whisp'ring sweet
 In my glad ear, thus speaks;—"So have thy foes,
 " Dudley and Edward done;—be therefore just,
 " And in full measure, Winchester, pay back
 " The debt in which thou'rt bound."—Oh!
 sweet revenge;

Blest balm of Gilead to a mind o'ercharg'd,
 With contumelious wrongs;—enter my heart,
 And fix thy mansion there,—more welcome far,
 Than unexpected pardon to a wretch,
 That on his death-bed lies.—How now, lieu-
 tenant?

GARDINER. LIEUTENANT.

LIEUTENANT.

So please your lordship, by the queen's command,
 I am to tell you, an express,—dispatch'd
 From Cambridge,—is arriv'd, who brings advice,
 Northumberland and his confed'rate lords,

Were

80 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Were by the earl of Arundel arrested,
And now are on the way, some ten miles off.

GARDINER.

'Tis well;——I follow you.——Go on before.

S C E N E III. Guildford's *apartment.*

GUILDFORD.

I'm swallow'd up in wonder, to reflect
What num'rous ills subject the state of man :
Now, 'tis we smiling in the midst of peace,
Laugh at the threat'ning storm, and vainly boast,
The distant tempest never can arrive,
Because we see it not;—then scarce have time
To bless the fond idea of our hopes,
When straight it disappears.——But yesterday,
I sat upon a throne.——Where am I now?——
Sad answer!—here confin'd.——My word, that
once
Was almost fate, the meanest wretch now scorns,
And hugs his begg'ry, when he thinks of me.——
Now, did a queen and wife,——oh heav'n! that
name
Strikes grief into my heart!—fill these blest arms,
In whom all grace and each perfection met,
That could strain close the bridal knot of love,
And make two bodies act as with one soul.——

Oh

Oh quick transition from a crown to bonds !
 From love and life, to infamy and death,
 Painful alternative !——Break,——break my heart ;
 Nor struggle longer with these mighty woes.

GUILDFORD. GARDINER.

LIEUTENANT *introducing* Gardiner.

Sir,—the lord chancellor.

GARDINER.

Withdraw, lieutenant :

We must confer awhile. [*to Guildford.*] You
 heed me not !——

Perhaps, I am too bold, and interrupt you ?

GUILDFORD.

Indeed, I look'd not for you ;—my sad soul
 Was otherwise employ'd.

GARDINER.

And heav'n approves
 The deed, its self inspir'd.——But, let death wait,
 Nor, on a day like this, proceed to glut
 His all-devouring maw.——No blood shall stain
 The steps, on which our Mary is gone up,
 Anointed—to her right.

GUILDFORD.

Patience good heav'n !——
 Leave me, my lord.—Oh ! leave a wretched man,
 Whose residue of life will soon be spent,——
 To fit his soul for death, and mourn alone.

G

GAR.

GARDINER.

That you distrust me thus, I blame you not,
 For I have seem'd a foe :—sure only *seem'd*,
 However else accus'd :—but now, my lord,
 Mercy unmingled takes her turn to reign,
 And I am come, in gentleness and love,
 With eyes that weep, and spirits that relent,
 To *shew* myself your friend, and be more kind.

GUILDFORD.

Shew then that kindness, and deserve my thanks :
 Leave me this instant,—leave me to my thoughts ;
 For time is short, death quick in its approach,
 My preparation long, and nothing ready.

GARDINER.

Talk not of death.—I come to save you from it.

GUILDFORD.

Save me !—oh no !—for cruel man, believe me,
Couldst thou relent; to Guildford, death brings
 nothing

He would avoid ;—for oh my bride !—let heav'n
 Hear, and record the sacred truth I utter.—
 Torn as I am from thee ;—the only good,
 My soul could be enamour'd of below ;
 'Tis happiness to die !

GARDINER.

But if I came,
 To snatch you both from death,—how would you
 thank me !—

Has your philosophy so tam'd your spirit,

That

NORTHUMBERLAND. 83

That you could smile upon the hand that robs you
Of a lov'd wife?—I know it has not;—there-
fore,

Know she is safe;—nay, both of you are par-
don'd.—

The gracious queen, forgetting your offences,
Cancels their doom, and instantly restores you
Once more to life, with innocence and honour.

GUILDFORD. *After a pause.*

Good God!—why do you mock my suff'rings
thus;
I'll not believe it.

GARDINER.

Take, my lord, good caution,
How you receive the mercy of her highness:
Natively good, she is inclin'd to save you;
Should you her love reject, you die deservedly,
And wet the unwilling axe to kill your wife.—
Go to;—be yet advis'd.

GUILDFORD.

What shall I say?
If I believe, I must distrust my ears.

GARDINER.

See here, my lord, the signet of the queen,
Confirming your good hap.

GUILDFORD.

Ha!—let me see.—
'Tis so;—'tis true!—oh miracle of goodness!—
Help heav'n!—support me to sustain this extacy.

GARDINER.

Within ;---who waits ?——he faints with sudden transport.

Raise and support him :——he revives.——How fare you ?

GUILDFORD.

Say, by what means shall I enough be grateful ?

GARDINER.

Mary is merciful, nor asks the princess——

GUILDFORD.

Ask ?——would she ask !——she shall *command* my service.

GARDINER.

Your debt, indeed, is great ;—yet here she begs you,

Tenderly anxious for a soul that's precious,——

GUILDFORD.

Oh give me way !——I am again undone.

GARDINER.

That instantly you would renounce your errors,
Yielding obedience to the church of Rome.

GUILDFORD.

Oh fool, fool, fool, to be transported thus !

GARDINER.

Quickly resolve :---the queen, my lord, expects me.

GUILDFORD.

There is no choice ;---my faith is far too precious,
To be exchang'd for life.

GAR-

GARDINER. *Going.*

Then death is certain.

GUILDFORD.

One moment, and no more. [*Aside.*] Should I recant,
To save my wife, I may, again, unswear,
And so repent.—It is a pious fraud;
And shall for once be tried.—[*to Gardiner.*] My
wav'ring soul

Is puzzled to resolve;—tell me, my lord,
Were the case yours, how then would *you* determine.

GARDINER.

Madman to hesitate upon the issue!—
Refuse our grace, and ask yourself what follows.—
Death here, and in the world to come,—damnation.

GUILDFORD.

Death and damnation!—gracious pow'r protect me.
Sleeps thy great arm, that thus presumptuous men,
Dare arrogate thy wrath!—This bold infringement
Upon the rights of heav'n, has,—to my comfort,
Wak'd me to horror,—and I will not turn.

GARDINER.

Think on thy wife.

GUILDFORD.

'Tis there, I am a wretch,
And labour with unutterable pangs,
Madness, where dwell'st thou!—hark!—what groan
was that!
See—see they come!—a shoal of armed furies!—

86 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Oh! thou curs'd priest, hope not, to pass unpunish'd:
Thy slumbers will I haunt.

GARDINER.

Take him away,
And keep good guard, lest he attempt his life.

GUILDFORD.

Soft; soft.—Prevent his flight.—Look, how the fiends
Swarm round their prey.—Seize Winchester;---
stab;---tear;---

Pluck out his heart,---Off;---off;---think not to
hold me;---

Oh!---I am stung to death!---

GARDINER. *Alone.*

The fearful end
Of heresy!---and now, I go to prove
What the *fair* traitor's courage will suggest;---
Death or renouncement of abhorred errors:
Heav'n grant the first,---tho' hell so gain a soul;
And may, with her, the universal line
Of the proud Dudley, meet one common fate;
Axes or cords, repenting when too late,
O'er their past crimes.---Oh! may they fall in death,
Cursing and curs'd with their departing breath.

A C T

A C T V.

SCENE I. *Lady Grey's apartment.*GREY, *with a book.*

YES;---I confess,---great bard,---the sacred
truths

Penn'd in thy page;---or, let the atheist tell me,
Why were we form'd of such excelling kind?---
Was it alone to live?---to be?---to breathe?---
Then die, and after, mingle with the dust,
To all eternity inanimate?----

Vain supposition, that the lord of life
Should fashion a creation by his form,
And dignify it with a reaf'ning soul,
For purposes so base!---But where,---oh! tell me,
Lies this dominion, which so much we dread?---
The journey all is dark,---imagination
Gliding through worlds and systems in an instant,
Drops here her wing, unequal to the task,
And horror stupifies enquiring thought.

ATTENDANT *entering.*

Dear lady, the lieutenant waits without,
And craves a moment's hearing.

GREY.

Bring him to me.---

A sudden horror overcasts my spirits,
 As if there were some evil, yet, at hand,
 I have not learn'd to bear :---poor flutt'ring thing,
 Tremble not thus :---the bitterness of death,
 Sure thou hast pass'd ;---the victory and sting
 Of the dark grave,---o'erleap'd.---

GREY. LIEUTENANT. ATTENDANT.

LIEUTENANT.

Grace and content
 Live in this place.---Urg'd, madam, by your
 husband,
 Hither I come, and must intreat your highness,
 In his own words, that previous to his suff'ring---

GREY.

My friend, no more,---

LIEUTENANT.

He may obtain th' indulgence
 Of a dear interview,---his last farewell.

GREY.

Unhappy that I am !

LIEUTENANT.

And I have giv'n
 My honour, as a pledge, I would not drop
 The suit which now I make, till you consent
 To grant him his request.

GREY.

GREY.

My soul shrinks back,
And trembles at the fatal consequences,
This meeting might produce!--alas! lieutenant!--
Think me not rude, or that I meet thy love
With an ungrateful heart;---but oh! believe me,
Thy goodness is too great, and brings thee hither,
A foe unto us both, pleading for that,
'Twere fatal to comply with.

LIEUTENANT.

If my friendship,
Mistaking its intent, have err'd so much,
As you have cause to fear;---for my offence,
Your pardon I intreat.

GREY.

Not so;---but hold me
That,—which I am,---much bound to thank your
friendship.

LIEUTENANT.

Can you not see him then with safety?

GREY.

No.---

I've gain'd a conquest at a precious price,
The price of vanquish'd love;---nor can I now,
The dear bought blessing foolishly give up,
For the light pleasure of a winged moment:—
That fatal meeting would undo us both;
Making us think with horror, we must part
Never to meet again.----Disturb that peace

Which

90 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Which conscious innocence plants in the bosom,
Turning our thoughts, from where they should be
fix'd,

On things of sordid worth ; the poor delights,
And sensual joys that captivate mankind ;---
As diff'rent from that bliss, which crowns the
wretch

In heav'n above, who suffers here on earth,
As thought can make it.

LIEUTENANT.

Angels might descend
And listen to her tongue.

GREY.

Is this sad place,---
Almost impervious to the blessed sun,
That feebly darts its beams through grated case-
ments,---

Fit habitation for that mirthful pow'r,
Whose throne,---surrounded by a train of smiles,---
Rises in hearts, prosperity makes glad ?---
Oh ! no ; no ; no :---be fix'd my soul at once,
Never to hope for comfort more on earth ;---
This is thy prison ;---think it so, till death
Signs thy release, transporting thee to bliss.

LIEUTENANT.

Excellent lady !

GREY.

Think not, good lieutenant,
That my love wanes when I refuse this meeting,
Since

Since I have turn'd my thoughts, in my retirement,

To suffer as I ought.—On earth, there is not,
Save my dear lord, one object, worth my care.—

What folly then, to rush upon a chance,
Where both of us may be for ever lost !

In the soft arms of love, we might once more
Sink and forget we were at last to part ;

Then, in the hour of death, all cheerless go
Down to the grave, and the past scenes of life,
Inly regret when other thoughts should arm us.

LIEUTENANT.

Oh misery !——oh virtue in distress !

GREY.

And if it so fell out,——(my nature starts
With apprehension, to reflect upon it !)——
Might not our meeting prove a gilded pill,
A deadly mixture varnish'd o'er with art,
Sweet to the taste indeed, but when once down,
A nauseous drug, that, circling through the veins,
Would feed on life, and agonize the frame,
With tortures undescrib'd ?

LIEUTENANT.

Alas ! alas !

You fear not without cause ;—but, gentle lady,
Do not, at once, reject your lord's petition ;—
Give him some hope,——some distant expectation,
Of seeing you again.

GREY.

GREY.

That, as you please
To give my meaning words, when you return.

LIEUTENANT.

Else, in the height of sorrow, might he construe
Your pious caution into cruelty
And think you had forgot the name of husband.

GREY.

Ha!—husband!—guard thee at that name, my heart,
Nor wake to the alarm.—It will not be :
The sound strikes deep in my distracted soul,
And drives me from myself.—Take pity, heav'n,
Behold me toss'd upon tempestuous waves,
The sport of ev'ry gust, and lend thy aid,
To guide me safely to the port of peace.

LIEUTENANT.

Madam, I take my leave.

GREY.

Return good sir,
And to my lord relate my fix'd resolve :—
Our last farewell is past.—When next we meet,
I trust we shall possess some happier shore,
Safe from the storms that separate us here.

LIEUTENANT.

I'm all obedience.

GREY.

And to you, lieutenant,
Permit me to present some dying pledge
Of my esteem.—These tablets :—take 'em, sir.
I have

I have therein, as you yourself will find,
 Penn'd the sad tale of my disastrous fate:—
 Haply the story may excite a tear,
 When I am in the grave.

LIEUTENANT.

I thank you, madam,
 When thou art dead, and I behold this jewel,
 Thy mem'ry will grow new.—Heaven guard
 your highness,
 And recommend you to your peace of mind.

GREY.

But one word more, and then, adieu for ever.
 Say to my lord, by heav'n's high pow'r, I charge
 him

Never to bring upon his soul, destruction,
 By seeking, on dishonourable terms,
 To save his self from death: and thou, lieutenant,
 As thou wouldst try to execute the wishes
 Breath'd in a death-bed hour, conjure my Guildford,
 That, for my sake, he make no base concessions,
 For I can die with joy.—The raven, Winchester,
 Came here at noon, and much, from his persuasion.
 Have I good cause to dread.

LIEUTENANT.

I will perform it.

GREY.

Oh! should his fears or tenderness betray him
 Into vile terms,—assure him, my affliction
 Would, at the block, to desperation drive me;
 And, not to part with her that gave me being,

Not

94 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Not to be torn from an indulgent father,
 Not to behold the bloody executioner,
 Standing in act to part my soul and body,
 Would, to this heart, return with half the terrors
 Lodg'd in a thought like that.—Farewell,——
 by dwelling

Longer on this, I might undo my courage;
 Which to prevent,—adieu.—He's gone;——
 my praises,
 Heav'n, do thou take; that now, the sting of dying
 Strengthen'd by thee, I've robb'd of all its
 sharpness.

So, when loud winds th' unsettled deep, deform,
 Th' affrighted seaman trembles at the storm;
 Sees all around sad prospects of despair
 And flies for instant help, to heav'n, in pray'r
 When, if the winds, their wild contention cease,
 Gratefully glad, he feels returning peace;
 Pursues his course along the winding shore
 And thinks of danger and distress no more.

S C E N E II. *The street.*

CHENEY. BEAUFORT.

CHENEY.

Beafort, good day.

BEAUFORT.

The like to you Sir Thomas:
 Whither away, that you are up so early?

CHENEY.

CHENEY.

What?—know you not, the duke must die this morning!

BEAUFORT.

True, but the day's yet young.

CHENEY.

As early,—Beaufort,—

As the time is,—a crowd's already gather'd
Cov'ring the place;—Will you walk forwards
with me?—

I have a stand, adjoining to the scaffold.

Where you may see the whole.

BEAUFORT.

I take your offer.

As we go on, I pray you, sir, inform me,
What of lord Guilford, may have reach'd your
knowledge.

CHENEY.

Him, I have not, since condemnation spoke with,
But, as I learn from those that tend his person;
Under confinement, like a man, he bears him;
Fears not to die, nor much regrets his sentence,
Since the sole object worthy his attention,
On whom the tenderest of his thoughts are anchor'd,
Must of the doom partake.

BEAUFORT.

But public rumour
Says, you became a mediator for them.

CHENEY.

Beaufort, I did;—but they, with noble courage,
Kept to their faith, and scorn'd the proffer'd mercy.

Why

96 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Why I so praise them,—to deal plainly with you,—
Is—as thou know’st—our hatred born to Dudley,
Rather than loyalty on Mary’s party,
Made us Jane’s foes, and of a throne depriv’d her.

BEAUFORT.

No doubt,—no doubt.—Well, peace in their
last moments,
Be with them both; and, howsoe’er our great ones
Deem ’em deserving of the fate she suffers,
Pray heav’n, our present ruler prove as good.

SCENE III. Northumberland’s *apartment*.

NORTHUMBERLAND. LIEUTENANT.

LIEUTENANT.

I’ve watch’d by him this half hour, but have never
Seen any thing so strange.—He wakes.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Where am I?

LIEUTENANT.

Why does my lord ask that?—Here, in your
chamber.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Give me your hand.—Ha!—dead or living,
tell me?

LIEUTENANT.

What is it moves your grace?

NOR-

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Tell me, lieutenant,
Was I not mov'd but now?

LIEUTENANT.

Oh! yes and often.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Terrible fears, back to the hell that sent you.
Heav'n can redeem my soul from all your tortures,
And 'tis to heav'n I pray.

LIEUTENANT.

Alas! sir, tell me,
What so disturbs your spirits?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Oh! lieutenant,
Since I last sunk to rest, I've had a vision,
Dreadful indeed!—Heav'n!—of what trifling
instruments,
Can thy almighty pow'r make use to punish!

LIEUTENANT.

What was this dream, my lord, that so distracts
you?

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Thou shalt know all;—for though my life, by
nature,
Should be stretch'd out, till time no more had
being,
Ne'er would its horrors pass from my remembrance,
Such the impression, they have made upon me.

H

LIEU-

LIEUTENANT.

Speak with more comfort, sir.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Methought, lieutenant,
As on my bed I lay, all darkness round me,
Pond'ring on that, which must this morning hap-
pen,
Sudden as lightning, back were drawn the curtains,
And by the moon's faint lustre, I discover'd,
Streaming with blood, the ghost of the protector
Headless and pale.—Cold sweats bedew'd my
body,
When, to increase still more my consternation,
Thus spake a voice :—" This,—cruel, perjur'd
Dudley,—
" This was thy work, for which thou soon must
" suffer :—
" Rise then, and follow where thy guide shall lead
thee."

LIEUTENANT.

Merciful heav'n !

NORTHUMBERLAND.

What could I do ?—I dreaded
Left to refuse, might draw down greater veng'ance,
Whilst to obey had equal horror in it :—
Thus did I lie, between the extreams of doubting,
Terror and fear, till, suddenly from heav'n,
Issued a bolt, at which I fell affrighted,
Into a swoon :—what follow'd next, I know not ;
But

But when I woke, myself I found transported
 Into a pit, whose bottom burnt with sulphur,
 Where, within view, a thousand souls lay prostrate,
 Roll'd in the flames.

LIEUTENANT.

No marvel this should fright you:
 I that but hear it, am struck dumb with horror.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

I rose, and my despairing eyes directed
 Forward and round ;—when oh !—what sights of
 terror,
 Sadden'd each part !——What cries from guilty
 wretches
 Deafen'd my ears !——Methought, from despera-
 tion
 I had pluck'd strength, and with a trembling
 footing
 Travers'd the fiery lake ;—but righteous heav'n !
 How my heart sunk as I proceeded forwards !
 How my knees struck with fear and fright together !
 How did I shake to view the livid lightning
 Dart all around, at each alternate moment,
 Flakes of long fire, my tortur'd sense convincing,
 I was in hell.

LIEUTENANT,

Speak, sir, no further of it.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Still is the worst to come.—Whilst thus I wander'd,
 Treading on flames, I hear'd the words deliver'd,

H 2

“ Rise

100 NORTHUMBERLAND.

“ Rise all ye guilty; and repair to judgment.”
Then, to the rocks I call’d;—but they were senseless:

Hide me ye caves, I cried, in your dark bosom;
They were deaf too;—and, to increase my horrors,
Ev’n when I thought to hide myself, by falling
Flat on the earth,—that comfort was deny’d me.

LIEUTENANT.

Make your tale short, my lord, if you must finish;
Bad, you make worse, by dwelling so upon it.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Thus to my trial brought, again, the spirit
Of the wrong’d Somerset appear’d before me,
And on his charge, soon, condemnation follow’d,
Spoke in these terms;—“ Seize him ye fiends, and
bear him

“ Back from this place to everlasting tortures.”
When, at the word, a shoal of armed furies,
Yelling aloud, prepar’d to rush upon me.—
Frighten’d anew, to see their looks of terror,
Sharpness of fangs, and curling wreaths of serpents,
Starting, I woke.

LIEUTENANT.

A great and bless’d deliv’rance!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Oh! I have done such things, that now, lieutenant,
Heav’n puts them in array before my soul,
And drives me to despair.—Henceforth, let none
Confront eternal justice, heav’n offended,
Works for revenge, by means not less mysterious,
Than

NORTHUMBERLAND. 101

Than they are just ;—this brain it was that plann'd
The crimes for which I die ;—this arm that pulls
Destruction on my head.—How goes the morn-
ing?

LIEUTENANT.

Near on the stroke of ten.

NORTHUMBERLAND. *Alone.*

Leave me a little.—

Near on the stroke of ten !——Hart footed time,
How shall I bribe thee to delay thy progress ?—
Millions of worlds, in barter for a moment,
Would be a bless'd exchange.

[*the Lieutenant returns, introducing Warwick.*]

LIEUTENANT.

My lord of Warwick.—

Speak, sir, yourself, for look he's meditating:
I will attend without.

NORTHUMBERLAND, *not seeing his son.*

Guilt !—scorpion guilt !

How pointed is thy sting !—thy pangs, how pain-
ful !——

How terrible the voice of thy upbraidings !—
Horrible thoughts !—pursue that theme no more,
But, in some sleep, let conscience be lock'd up,
And like a murd'rer steal on her repose ;
For, should *she* speak thy doom,—away, all hope,
Thy last appeal is past ;—from her dread bar,
Thou canst not fly to a superior court,
Or stand self pardon'd, if condemn'd by her.

WAR-

WARWICK.

Heart rending words!

NORTHUMBERLAND, *still not seeing him.*

But oh! vain flatt'ring hope!—

The vultur will be felt,—and now,—ev'n now,
 She brings to my rememb'rance ev'ry crime
 From my youth up:—a terrible account,
 Confounding all my hopes!—Let me fall down
 Here on the ground, to hide me from the face
 Of heav'n that I've incens'd; and, with my nails,
 Dig deep into the earth, till I have made
 A pit so low, that the enquiring eye
 Of the noon sun, may never to his ear,
 Proclaim where I am hid.—Is there no way
 To my repentance left?

WARWICK.

Oh, fir! look up,

And see in me your son.

NORTHUMBERLAND *looking up, and after a pause.*

Have you that name,

And are you here to add to my distress?
 Methought in dying I had nought to fear,
 But for myself.—Good God! why should you come
 To add to the afflictions of my soul,
 And aggravate its pangs?—Leave, leave me
 straight.

WARWICK.

Lay not on the affection of a son,
 A charge, like that severe:—had I divin'd

This

NORTHUMBERLAND. 103

This last, last interview, would give thee pain.
Be witness heav'n,—I rather would have dy'd ;
With joy, submitted my devoted head
To the stern axe, and never seen thee more,
Though all I wish'd for was a sad farewell.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Oh my torn heart !——Sure, nothing can exceed
The woes that I endure :——like the first man,
When,—by temptation led into the paths
Of guiltiness,—he sinn'd ;—methinks I stand
Dejected and forlorn,—for I,—like him,——
My children have undone.

NORTHUMBERLAND. WARWICK. LIEUTENANT.

LIEUTENANT.

The officers
Are waiting you without.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

And I must go,
But heav'n, that has ordain'd this day, well knows
With what regret of heart !——guilt will before
Take her stern march, and when I kneel to death,
My frightened spirit shall recoil, to think
On woes that have no end.

WARWICK.

No more of that.——
Though numberless your crimes, yet heav'n has
still
A pardon for them all.

NOR-

104 NORTHUMBERLAND.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

But I,—oh grief!—
Dare scarcely for that pardon heav'n intreat :
My sins exceed all hope, and looking up
To call upon his name, my blister'd tongue
Cleaves to the roof, denies its wonted task,
Or faintly speaks the word. For you, my son,
I've waded through an ocean of offence,
Lull'd conscience fast asleep, nor stopp'd at crimes,
The least of which, would hurl my soul to hell,
Though mercy rush'd between to snatch me from it.

WARWICK.

For *me* have you done this!—then I am curs'd!

NORTHUMBERLAND.

For you, and for your brothers, have I heap'd
Destruction on myself;—and yet not you,
Nor they, are therefore curs'd; since you have been,
Though the sad cause, yet innocent.—To make
My children great,—in Edward's artless ear,
The poison of rank flattery I pour'd,
And, that thy brother Guildford might be king,
Persuaded him to place a sister's right
Upon his cousin's head.

WARWICK.

The cause was good
Which prompted you so far.—

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Dissemblance all;
Nor that, my only crime.—In my young days,
Plainly

Plainly foreseeing, Somerset would lie
 A stumbling block 'tween me and Edward's grace,
 I thirsted for his blood, while with a wretch,—
 For sure, he was no brother, that could wish
 To shed a brother's blood.—I leagu'd in means
 Against his life;—to treason added murder,
 And brought him to the block.—Oh! Somerset,
 'Tis now thou art aveng'd.

LIEUTENANT.

My lord.—

WARWICK.

Alas!

These pangs are great indeed!—In pity haste.
 Some friend,—enquire out the remorseless queen,
 And tell her, Warwick his own blood will shed,
 To save a father's life.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

'Tis all in vain;

Come then and take my blessing 'ere I die.—
 May heav'n show'r down its choicest gifts upon you;
 And, as my death shall expiate *your* offences,
 Never I charge you,—with uncertain footing,—
 Leave the plain road of life to court ambition:
 Her temple is a building, fair without,
 Rais'd on the summit of an Alpine hill;
 To which fools press, and climbing up the steep,
 Scarce gain the heights, and view the region round
 'em,

But with pale fear and giddiness possess'd,

Into

106 NORTHUMBERLAND.

Into the vale they fall, where, never yet,
Has pity found its way to shed one tear.

WARWICK.

Now is there not some friendly hand prepar'd,
With speed to strike me dead !

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Bear him away ;
And in one word sum'm'd up,---a sad farewell,---
Take my last speech.—For ever !—oh !---farewel.
Now to the block lead on ;--where come,--that all
Who see me die, may profit by my fall,
With my last breath, adjuring heav'n, I'll swear,
Had I, at first, but shunn'd ambition's snare,
Never this fate had lighted on my name,
Ending my life with infamy and shame.



T H E
F R I E N D S.

A
T R A G E D Y.

B Y
MARK ANTHONY MEILAN.

He neither could nor durst;—the guiltless youth!
Ye moon and stars, bear witness of the truth!
His only crime,---if friendship can offend,---
Is too much love for his unhappy friend.

DRYDEN'S VIRGIL. *Æneid IX.*

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T H E

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MILLAR

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE story, to which the following tragedy owes its existence, was communicated to the Author, by a young gentleman, who purchased it, amongst several lots of books, at the sale of the late Mr. Osborne, of Gray's-Inn: it made, of it's self, a little manuscript of three leaves, and was written in the Greek tongue, under the title of *ὁ χρησμός*; that is, the Oracle: since which, the Author, in turning over a number of loose pamphlets, found the same story inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine for January, 1766. By referring to that Magazine, the reader may discover how far the poet has deviated from his original, in order,---as to the best of his judgment, he was capable,---to adapt it to the stage. The story, he imagines, will be found excellent; and, it is hoped, the severity of criticism, may be tempered with the benevolence of candour, when the innovations he has introduced, and the sentiments and language of the piece, are submitted to the opinion of the public.

THE CHARACTERS.

SIRUS, king of Sayria.

SERJESTAN, his reputed son, and friend of Aghenor.

PHAREL, a peasant.

AGHENOR, his reputed son, and friend of Serjestan.

SARDIS, a nobleman, the father of Orixia.

ORIXA, the wife of Aghenor, married to him, but privately, two years before the beginning of the Play.

MOROC, a Moor, the captive of Sardis.

STRATICEE, the confidante of Orixia. ACHMET, a concealed infant, the son of Aghenor. OFFICERS. GUARDS. RUFFIANS, of the party of Serjestan. ATTENDANTS. PETITIONERS and COMMON PEOPLE.

The SCENE is at ALEPPO, the capital of Syria.

T H E
F R I E N D S.

A C T I.

SCENE. *The house of Sardis.*

AGHENOR. ORIXA.

ORIXA.

STILL my Aghenor,—still, wilt thou distract
me?—

What of Serjestan?—Is thy friend a bar
'Tween happiness and thee?—I've heard him swear,
Not all the treasure which the world possesses,
Ever should make him form a wish, or thought,
He would conceal from thee.

B

AGHE-

AGHENOR.

That thou may'st know
What heav'n this day decrees, to make Aghenor
Most wretched of mankind,—Serjestan loves thee.
Oh! then betimes,——I only seek thy safety,——
Fly,—fly from danger, whilst retreat is left thee;
Call thy affections back, if thou wouldst shun
The certain ruin, my embrace is curs'd with;
For thou must know, this rival of Aghenor
Is a king's son.

ORIXA.

A king's!

AGHENOR.

The son of Sirus.—

Well mayst thou start.—Abramminin, the priest,
Chief of our Syrian augurs, e'er his birth
Read in an off'rings entrails, that the life
Of the young infant,—by a kindred hand
Would be, in future, sought.--His queen deceas'd--
Not unforetold, her death,—the afflicted king,
Sent him,—for so she'ad counsell'd,—to be nurs'd
Under my mother's care; who—far from court,
Liv'd in a lonely cottage, near the wood,
Planted beside the river of Euphrates.

ORIXA.

A tale of wonder this!

AGHENOR.

Myself was then,
A very infant too;——and growing up
In our young breasts the seeds of friendship throve,
And

THE FRIENDS. 3

And made us what we are ;—full eighteen years
 Compleated since his birth. Serjeftan left
 Our folitary cot, and with him,——I
 Have, as thou know'ft, the two paft years, confum'd
 Here, in thy father's houfe, where the good king
 Planted him firft to gain the fciences
 That dignify a throne.----His birth obfcur'd,
 Till now, myfelf not knew ;---and that the world
 May find him worthy thee,---this prefent morn
 Proclaims him what he is,---th' immediate heir
 Of his great father's crown.

ORIXA.

Let him command
 In Syria ;——and on Sirus' throne, give laws
 To Afia,—to the world.——My only wifh,
 Is happinefs with thee.

AGHENOR.

My cruel fate
 Infults me by this kindnefs ;---which, fo poor,
 Since yefternight, has partial fortune made me,
 I never can return.——Now,——as thou art
 The wife of my fond heart,——by the foft hours
 We have together pafs'd,---the folemn vow,
 Which, secretly, thou mad'ft before the prieft,
 When we our marriage ftolc,—by that dear babe,
 Fruit of our mutual love,——decide thyfelf,
 If I,—a poor man's fon,—who for life's means
 Depend on my friend's bounty, fhould have claim'd
 The bleffing of thy charms, to merit which,
 Ev'n royalty's too poor.

B 2

ORIXA.

THE FRIENDS.

ORIXA.

Thou dost upbraid
The ardour of my passion, with a thought
Unworthy of the man that has my love :
Meet it with more regard, than to conceive,
That being what thou art,—thou art less dear
Than if thou wert a king.

AGHENOR.

I am a king ;
And rule more largely, bless'd with but one smile,
One cordial wish from thee,—than were the thrones
And hearts of Asia mine ;—yet what avails
All this *my* happiness ;——if to enjoy
The blessing unimpair'd,——thou must be made
The partner of my flight.—Can those fine limbs,
That have the softest couches, always press'd,
Endure a bed of earth ;——a long farewell
Bid to thy costly robes of tyrian die,
And wretchedly expos'd to ev'ry blast ;
Brave the descending storms,—for this and more
Must be thy doom,—if, when thy father knows
Our loves are so far gone,—thou would'st continue
Still to be mine ?——by sacred love I swear
It never shall be so,——for I, alone
Will fly, as far as earth has footing for me,
That my Orix, in Aleppo here,
Still may remain to live as fits her birth.

ORIXA.

ORIXA.

If thou should'st go, and I be left behind,
Will not the suns successive as they rise,
Gilding the plains where thou shalt make a pillow
For thy tir'd head,--upbraid me for inconstancy?--
Will they not seem to say, where, where, Aghenor,
Where is Orixá now, that bird of summer,
Who for two years of bliss consoled with thee,
But, with a more than woman's usual frailty,
Spread her light wings, and for a warmer climate
Flew off, nor look'd behind her, when thy winter
Frowning came on?—Oh!—to evince my passion,
If there needs proof,——let us begone this instant.
Stretch'd on the stones that pave Arabia's desarts,
If but with thee,—I'd sleep till morning wakes us;
Nor, should descending rains have pow'r to fright
me,

But, as a plant upon the thirsty mountain
Water'd, revives,---I'd flourish and look fairer.

AGHENOR.

I am to blame, that I should doubt thy firmness,
As I have done :——yet, is not this,—Orixá,---
All my offence :---thou seest me here before thee,
Charg'd with a message of the unkindest import :
Wouldst thou believe it ! the good prince imagines
Nothing but friendship joins us,---and has begg'd
Ev'ry good office of a friend, to speak
His passion in thine ear.——Already Sirus,
Though with reluctance, has consented to it ;

6 THE FRIENDS.

And, with thy father's wishes, will he come
To learn his fate from thee.

ORIXA.

From me, Aghenor?

AGHENOR.

Still to proceed,---for nothing will I cover
From thy great love,---through all my thoughts
I hunted

For the curs'd means of yielding to Serjestan,
What I could claim in thee;---and though, thank
heav'n,

None of those means occur'd to my reflection,
Still, 'twas my wish they might: therefore, accept
All the atonement penitence can make,
Letting me love thee still;---though to my arms
In thy sweet stead, I clasp a frightful shadow,
And, for a husband's bed, go to the scaffold,
Yielding my life up there.---By heav'n, thou
must not

Stay my request; for death will be most welcome,
Dying for thee.

ORIXA.

Dying for me!---oh horror!

Yes, thou must die when Sardis knows this secret.
He has too much ambition in his nature,
Ever to think his child should wed beneath her: ---
Shall thy Orixia then be arm'd against thee,
And by a deed, which future times shall call
More cruel, than the cruelest commit,
Flat treason to the loyalty of love?---

Heav'n

THE FRIENDS.

7

Heav'n to that deed say no ; and, still more gracious,

Point out where lies the way to happiness ;
For, though death crosses it, I will tread the path,
If all, on this side of the grave I love,
My best belov'd Aghenor, may be safe.

AGHENOR.

This goodness is too much ! teach, teach me how
I may repay thy tenderness,——for love,
That borders not on madness, must fall short
Of the excessive debt.——In ev'ry point,
I yield myself to thee ;---and, though I know
Thy frown must kill my friend,---I am content
To rend the ties which hitherto have join'd us :
His offices of friendship, I blot out
This instant from my mind :---I part with all,---
My aged father, that first gave me breath,
My king, my friend, and country :---nature's voice
Pleads here in vain ;——I give up nature too ;
And, were the empire of the world my own,
To trample on at will,——I would despise
Such limited dominion,---to keep thee,
That art my all in all !

ORIXA.

Oh ! now indeed,
Your love redoubles ;---and th' excess of joy
Rolling in torrents to my heart,---becomes
Too much to be sustain'd,---Oh !---that my grave
Could be within these arms !

B 4

AGHENOR.

AGHENOR.

Long, long, survive,
 And flourish in their clasp :---but, see my love,
 Thy father interrupts us,---and I judge
 With tidings of the prince.—To thy good fate
 I leave thee for a while :---be but thyself,
 And study to receive his news, with all
 The innocent art thou hast :---when we next meet,
 And long it shall not be,---I mean to give
 The greatest proof of love :---fly with thee hence,
 To some remote abode,——or tarrying,---die,
 For the great crime of having stole thy heart,
 When Sardis knows the theft.---One more request
 I have to make: speak kindly to the prince ;
 And, when he kneels,---oh! be thou merciful :
 Dash him not down at once into despair,
 But gently let him fall.—For, surely, that
 Which my friend's heart distracts, will break my
 own,

SARDIS. ORIXA.

SARDIS.

How does my child,---my heart's delight and dar-
 ling?——
 Came not Serjestan here?

ORIXA.

I have not, sir,
 Beheld him yet to day.

SAR-

SARDIS.

Then, till he come,
Give ear to thy glad father, whose old age
Is charm'd as with new life, and youth restor'd,
Seeing this happy day.

ORIXA.

What may you mean?
What unexpected happiness, has heav'n
Thus suddenly vouchsaf'd?—impart it, fir,
And let me share it with you.

SARDIS.

May the hour
For ever be held sacred, when the saint——
Who was thy mother, and is now in bliss,——
Conceiv'd a child like thee :—blest'd be the day
That gave thee to the world,—for thou wert surely
Born to advance the glory of old Sardis,
Crowning his age with happiness and honour.

ORIXA. *Aside.*

I dread to hear the rest, and yet I must
Dissemble my concern.

SARDIS.

This blood of mine,
That yesterday but sluggishly flow'd on,
Retiring to my heart,---now shall begin
Its course again anew,---mount to my cheek,
Giving fresh vigour to the languid pulse,
That scarce kept life afoot.---In one word summ'd,
To tell thee all thy bliss,---receive it thus,

True

True as the tale is strange.--Our prince, Serjeſtan,
 How he has clim'd to royalty, ſhall be
 The ſubject of a more deliberatè moment.——
 Deigns thee his love,---and on the coming morrow,
 Will, at the altar, from my hand receive thee.

ORIXA.

Wonder has ſtruck me dumb.---I have no answer.

SARDIS.

Thy ſilence ſhall beſt testify thy joy,
 As well as thy conſent.---Be thou prepar'd
 For the approaching hour.

ORIXA.

And do you, ſir,
 Agree that I ſhould wed?

SARDIS.

What mean thy words,
 Thus fault'ringly pronounc'd?---Do I agree
 That thou ſhould'ſt wed?---Ask me, if I agree
 Thou ſhould'ſt become a queen?---then looking
 back
 Through thy whole life,---from all my fondneſs
 paſt,
 Answer thyſelf, I can deny thee nought.
 Did I but deem it poſſible---thou, here
 Could'ſt be the unwilling one,---I ſhould beſt ſhow
 My love by uſing force.

ORIXA.

Till now,---I ne'er
 Had reaſon to complain.---A daughter ſure,
 Wrong

THE FRIENDS.

11

Wrongs not her duty much, that only begs
A father, with less cruel tenderness,
To use his wretched child.

SARDIS.

My wretched child!
Great Rimmon, what means this?—my wretched
child!
What is it makes thee so?

ORIXA.

That which I hear
Coming from you.

SARDIS.

I understand not this.
Say in plain terms,—by what strange means,—my
words
Can give thee aught but joy?

ORIXA.

They give me cause
To fear, fir, you will force me to a deed
That's loathsome to my soul.

SARDIS.

Am I awake?

ORIXA.

You are,—and at your feet,—you see your child
That,—you have often said,—was ev'ry thing
Precious to you in life:—if she, indeed,
E'er was half worthy of a thought so kind,
Hear her with patience now.

SAR-

SARDIS.

Patience!--by heav'n
 I am confounded!--lost!--what! when I come
 Anxious to bless thee with the happiest tidings
 Child could e'er learn, or I bestow upon thee,
 To be receiv'd by an undutecous daughter,
 As if I bore a basilisk,--whose eyes,
 At the first glance,--strike dead th' unhappy gazer!
 What patience can bear this?

ORIXA.

I am to blame:--
 But know, sir, if you force this match upon me,
 Your child is lost for ever;--there is not
 A wretch upon the earth, whose scanty meals
 Are earn'd by constant toil, but will be happier
 A thousand times than I.

SARDIS.

Ungrateful wretch!
 Let go my robe.--When I have watch'd and toil'd
 So for thy happiness,--dost thou return
 This way my love, and insolently urge--
 Ev'n to my face,--I toil to make thee wretched?

ORIXA.

Why will you force me to espouse Serjestan,
 Whom scarce, as yet I know?--hands should not
 join,
 Till hearts have long been one:--there must be
 love--

I've heard yourself to say so,--to make the bed

Of

Of marriage a bless'd state;—and can we, fir,
Have felt the mutual flame?—Whene'er I wed,
I shall desire to love the man I take,
And be by him belov'd.

SARDIS.

Half of thy wish

Already is fulfill'd.—Serjeſtan loves,
Nor canſt thou hate:—what wouldſt thou more
than this?—

Take then his hand to-morrow, and, believe me,
It is as ſure, as that the wants of miſers
Grow with their wealth;—deſire ſhall, after marriage,

Spring from poſſeſſion.—Go,—you ſpeak, Orixa,
Like what you are,—a young, unpraſtis'd virgin.

ORIXA.

Oh! on the ground thus bent, let me requeſt you,
Speak with more tenderneſs.

SARDIS.

As thou doſt wiſh

That tenderneſs ſhould laſt—be wiſe, and pay
Obedience to my will;—thou art not ſure,
Like fools, whom long proſperity makes vain,
So blinded by the love thou haſt receiv'd
At thy fond father's hands,—but thou muſt know
How, in a moment, I have pow'r to make thee
Wretched indeed:—that I may turn thee forth,
Div'eſted of all hopes,—to beg thy bread
Before unfriendly doors;—prevent that curſe,
By being wiſe in time.

ORIXA.

ORIXA.

Will you not hear me?

SARDIS.

And have a care,—oh! have a care, I charge thee,
How thou dost trifle with thy house's honour;
For, as I fear, it springs not from indiff'rence
To the king's son, Serjestan, that thou wav'st
This offer of a kingdom; but because
Thy heart is with another:—be it so;
And, like a parricide, thou'ast done a deed,
Will break thy father's heart in his old age,
And send him to the grave with shame and sorrow.

ORIXA.

This language rives my heart,---nor do your looks
Less terrify me, sir.—Oh! I could speak,
Did not a tempest lighten in your eye
That harrows up my soul.

SARDIS.

[*Aside.*] Is't come to this?

I must dissemble then.—[*Aloud.*] Thou dost mistake
The expression painted there.

ORIXA.

Could I but trust you?

SARDIS.

Still will I be thy father; and believe me,
If, as I dread too much,—thou hast already
Giv'n up thy heart,—I'll take it for the fault
Of thy ill-judging youth:—only confess,
And by thy mother's sepulchre, I swear,

To

To pardon thee th' offence:—nay more,—though
well

I might enforce this match,—I likewise swear,
That thou shalt wed the man that has thy love,
Whenever 'tis thy wish.

ORIXA.

This goodness, sir,
Is too much to be born;—nor will I hide
What gratitude and love, should long e'er this,
Have taught me to reveal.—My heart, indeed,
No longer is my own.

SARDIS.

Give me to know,---
And trifle not,---to whom thou hast resign'd it?

ORIXA.

Yet when I name him, sir; think love, like death,
Breaks ev'ry fence, and levels all distinction.
Split not my heart, by urging to my passion,
The meanness of my choice.

SARDIS.

I swear, I will not.—
Whom speak'st thou to but Sardis, that still loves
thee?

ORIXA.

Think on Aghenor then, and spare these blushes.

SARDIS.

Lov'st thou, Aghenor?---humph!---the prince's
friend?—

A peasant's son, I think!

ORIXA.

ORIXA.

Oh! do not name
The birth of him I love.—Who can command
The workings of her heart.---This, fir, has mov'd
you?

SARDIS.

No;—not at all.

ORIXA.

Indeed---I fear it has.—
I fee you are displeas'd.

SARDIS.

My looks deceive thee.---
[*Aside.*] A beggar!---but no matter. [*Aloud.*] I am
thinking
Thou art not fo to blame:---we, none of us,
Are masters of our hearts.—[*Aside.*] In spite of
prudence,
This rage will have its way.—Let me confider—
[*Aloud.*] Leave me, Orix.

ORIXA.

Say then, you forgive me.

SARDIS.

I cannot:—to fay fo, were to fuppose.
Thou hadst offended me:---but I acknowledge,
All have a right to act as thou haft done,
Loving the man they please.—Go in,---and hear
me;—

Should the prince come, thou must use art a little.
Say, that thou hat'ft him not;—that thou wilt ftudy
How to deserve his love;---yet,---more than all,

Lock

Lock up his rival's name;—let not that 'scape
thee:

Should the winds whisper,---that Aghenor loves
thee,

Thou mayst conceive the rest;—go in and think
Thou art my daughter still.

ORIXA.

I'm lost in joy,
And never, till this moment, was I happy:

SARDIS. *Alone.*

SARDIS.

I do remember well—it was foretold,
That by a kindred hand,—the prince, of life
Might be despoil'd:—these lying priests of ours
Traffic in deadly prophecies,---and straight,
Easy credulity speeds to their temples,
Bribing the rev'rend cheats to worry heav'n
With mercenary pray'rs.—Will it not then
Be a consummate master-piece of cunning,
But to point out Aghenor for the wretch,
That seeks his prince's life?---that, fully prov'd,
Which I will order well,—no pow'r on earth
Shall save him from the scaffold.---Her first love
Thus happily remov'd,—Orix then
May of Serjestan think.—I go to do it,
This very hour,---this moment.---Ho!---within?
But see the prince draws nigh.

C

SARDIS.

SARDIS. SERJESTAN.

SARDIS.

My lord, how comes it,
You have withdrawn yourself?—my daughter
waits
To know your royal will.

SERJESTAN.

Believe me, fir,
A more than common sadness hangs upon me,
Damping my resolution, and I go
To meet Orixas eyes, with less than half
A lover's wonted fire:—what may I hope?—
How will the gen'rous maid that charms me, take
The offer of my heart?—She will not, sure,
Despise the petty gift?

SARDIS.

When kings command,
The subject should obey;—and I,—my lord,—
The humblest of your royal father's slaves,—
Think, there would be a charity in force,
If, to her int'rest deaf, my child could prove
Unwilling to be blest'd.

SERJESTAN.

I would not owe
My happiness to force;—for, judge me heav'ns,
So perfect is my love, so bright my flame,
That should Orixas have already form'd
Views of her own,—I swear, I would put off

The

The lover, and,—if possible,—become
The priest to wed her :---never, would I plant
One thorn in her soft bosom,---whilst I fought
To pluck the sweets found there.

SARDIS.

If then you please
To walk within,—I dare engage my word—
Orixia will be found dispos'd, as far
As with a maiden's modesty, she may—
To meet your love with hers ;—let me intreat,
If otherwise it seem,—that you will hold
Her bashfulness alone as the offender.

SERJESTAN.

You shall command in all.

SARDIS.

Humbly I wish
Your hopes may find success, and so take leave.

SARDIS. *Alone.*

SARDIS.

To help thee in thy suit ;—what, ho ! within ;
My faithful slave, come forth :---'tis thy lord's
voice.—

I have to speak with thee.

SARDIS. MOROC.

SARDIS.

Come nearer yet.—
Moroc,---as I have always found thee just,

So let me find thee now :——thy honesty,
 Like a rich jewel, whose inherent worth
 Pays well the miner's toil,—would, of its self,
 Be thy reward,—yet, with a bounteous hand,
 Will I increase that recompence, with aught
 Thou, from thy soul, canst wish.

MOROC.

Let my lord speak.

SARDIS.

Well thou remember'st, when the chance of war
 Brought thee a captive here,—that, from the hands
 Of a hard master,—with excessive ransom,
 Pitying,—I set thee free ;—nay more, that mark-
 ing

How heavily subjection press'd upon thee,
 By an oath ratify'd above,—I promis'd,
 If for ten years thou would'st be faithful to me,
 It should then end ;—but if *to day* thou serve me,
 Only declare what recompence thou look'st for,
 Be it ev'n instant liberty from bonds,
 And by our sacred faith, I swear to grant it.

MOROC.

The heav'ns preserve my lord ;—and, on my knees,
 By the great god of nature,—yon bright sun,
 Solemn I swear, to execute thy pleasure.

SARDIS.

Thus is it then.—The cause of Sirus' sorrow,
 Comes from a prophecy—made at the birth
 Of his now son ;—that prophecy assures him,
 Heav'n will think fit to put into the hand

Ev'n

Ev'n of one near to him, a sword, whose point
 Shall at the prince be aim'd, and notwithstanding
 Much has been said to prove the omen impious,
 Yet does the fear remain:—now, couldst not thou
 Enter upon a deed most innocent,
 And by success, make the king's pillow smooth,
 Now tumbled with rude dreams?

MOROC.

Let my oath bind me
 To a good deed like this.

SARDIS.

There spoke my Moroc.
 Know'st where Aghenor is?

MOROC.

Just as I enter'd,
 Left he the house, and with his usual custom
 Goes to the chace.—Upon the forest's borders,
 North of the town,—he and Serjestan meet
 At the twelfth hour.

SARDIS.

More than I hop'd.—Good Moroc,
 Hie thou in haste and intercept their meeting,
 Pluck forth thy rapier and attack Serjestan,
 Hurting him not:—then, with dissembled sorrow,
 Give up thy sword;—the guard that's near him
 planted,
 Will, as they've orders, take thee to their keep-
 ing,
 But from this step thou must expect no danger,

For in the mean time, I, intent to save thee,
Will, to the king, accuse his friend Aghenor,
Turning the crime on him.

MOROC.

My lord!

SARDIS.

Thou'rt startled,
Yet, on my soul,——this plot shall be attempted,
Nor either thou,——or I,---th' adviser of it,
Censur'd for guilt.——Aghenor's seeming practice
On his friend's life,——so happily defeated,——
Shall, from the bosom of the king, remove
All he now dreads:——for, thou must know,——
Aghenor,

Dear as he is,—may well be thought as coming
In the prediction's scope:—nay, even Serjestan,
Thinking himself by miracle protected,
Shall of the joy partake,——and highest heav'n
Find its great pow'r to save, no longer doubted,

MOROC.

But for Aghenor?

SARDIS.

Him too,---though accus'd,
Will I,——by my authority with Sirus,---
Snatch from the block:---thy own life shall he
grant thee,
As thou wast touch'd with grief,——and the foul
crime
Left't unperform'd,——discov'ring thy abettor.

This

This and no more;—though in itself, th' attempt

Were of a damned kind,---yet duly weighing
How much of good, the consequence comes crown'd
with :

Will you,---like those that yield their lives in battle,
Who,---though engag'd to mar the works of
nature,——

Gain a bright crown,---become immortal by it.

MOROC.

I am resolv'd,---and need no other motive,
To the discharging of this enterprize.

SARDIS.

Follow me then:---within, I'll tell you further.

C 4

A C T

A C T II.

SCENE I. *The campaign adjoining to Aleppo.*

AGHENOR.

THE heat and fury of the chace grows slack ;
 Whilst, in yon grove, our panting huntsmen
 fit,

Screen'd from the noon-day sun :—yet, e'er we
 meet,

Let me think well :—till yesterday, when did I
 Keep from the prince my soul's most valu'd secrets ?
 He is, I know, too gen'rous to conceal
 Aught from his friend :—he 'as trusted me with
 that

Which, had he not with highest reverence
 Thought of my honesty,—plain nature would
 Have told him to suppress ;—he 'as made me too,
 His intercessor and his advocate ;
 Which I,—oh fool !—became :—then, villain like !
 Grew perjurd to my promise,—and employ'd
 My tongue *against* his cause :—what if I then
 Repent me of the crime, and,---all I can,---
 Withdraw a husband's claim ?—vain thought !—
 my soul,

So

So firmly she reigns here,——as soon might flee
 To its last mansion, and leave life behind,
 As she depart these arms,—and I, survive
 To mourn the loss I felt :—that thought resolves
 me.——

Mine she must be,—though forty thousand friends
 Fell to secure her so.

AGHENOR. SERJESTAN.

AGHENOR.

My friend, good morrow.
 Beats thy heart cheerfully—as to the music
 Of thy Orixá's voice?—what hope vouchsafes she?
 Tell it me all,——and let me share thy pleasure.

SERJESTAN.

Talk not of pleasure.——Love, whose rosy finger
 Lights up a flame in others,—to this bosom
 Comes like the hand of death.—I'm disappointed.

AGHENOR.

What may you mean?—receiv'd with coldness,
 say you?
 How can that be?

SERJESTAN.

I know not, my Aghénor;
 But, when I pleaded at her feet my passion,
 Stern as she could,—she chid me from her presence,
 And, on the sacred ardour of my love
 Sprinkling cold icicles,—confess'd, her bosom
 Was, at this juncture, ill dispos'd to marriage :—
 This

This and whatever else she urg'd,—thank heav'n,
By my fond love I am not yet so blinded,
But I could read, sprung from her hatred to me.

AGHENOR.

Wrong her not so :—she was by nature made
Gentle and kind ;—with diligence then ply her,
And, in despite of what now damps your prospect,
Shall she at last be won.

SERJESTAN.

Into my wounds,
Thou, like the hand that smooths the sick man's
pillow,
Pourest sweet balm :—oh ! my Aghenor, might I
Hope but thy aid ?—

AGHENOR.

Hope but my aid, Serjestan ?
I am all thine :—thou know'st it ;—there is no one
Sets at a higher price, that heav'n, his thoughts
Are fix'd on,—than I do, thy happiness ;
Thy happiness is mine :—my ev'ry wish
Centers in that, of wishing well to thee.

SERJESTAN.

Beyond all means of thanks, thy love pursues me.

AGHENOR. SERJESTAN. MOROC.

MOROC.

Defend thyself.

SERJESTAN.

What means the man ?—what wouldst thou ?

MOROC.

MOROC.

Pluck forth thy sword, young man,---thy life's in danger.

SERJESTAN.

My life!--the man is mad!--pass on, Aghenor.

MOROC.

Must I then basely shed thy blood?---think on't.---
Kill thee unarm'd?---

SERJESTAN.

Away;---I know thee not.

MOROC.

But thou wilt know me soon:---pluck forth thy
sword;
For one of us must die.

SERJESTAN.

I know thee not.---

Thou art deceiv'd:---go, if thou hast been wrong'd,
And elsewhere seek redress.

MOROC.

Brav'ft thou me thus?

Thy folly then bring on thy punishment,
Since none but fools are taught to hold life cheap.

AGHENOR.

Villain be gone!

MOROC, *seemingly aside to Aghenor.*

That's well:---as yet, we're safe.

AGHENOR.

What damned wretch art thou?---hence quit my
fight.

SERG-

SERJESTAN.

Thou art unarm'd, and might'st but lose thy life
In my defence.---Retire.---I have a sword,---
A sharp one too,---I think,---will do me right,
If I but draw it forth.

AGHENOR.

Thou art not mad !

MOROC.

I halt in my revenge.

AGHENOR.

Another step ;---

You stumble upon fate.

MOROC.

This is too much.---

I know thee well.---Aghenor is thy name ;---
Let that one word instruct thee to be wise,
Lest thou repent too late.

SERJESTAN.

Wretch, thou hast fav'd
Thy guilty life too long :---give, give me way ;
I am no babe,---and can avenge myself.---
Wrong me not thus.

MOROC. *Aside.*

It works as could be wish'd.

AGHENOR.

Into what danger would thy rashness drive thee !--
More for thy safety,---has the king decreed
That all approach unarm'd your highness' person :
Then by contesting thus,---on equal terms,---

With

With one who seeks your life ;---your father's care
Is made of no effect ;---and I, perhaps,
Might not alone the sorrow, but the blame
Of your death, bear :---desist, my lord,---desist.---
I, my own person, will expose to save you.---
If you're resolv'd,---there is no method left,
But thus to *make* you hold.

SERJESTAN.

Aghenor,---thou
Once wert my friend ;---render me back my sword,
Or thou conspir'st against my life and honour,
Wresting the means of my defence thus from me.

AGHENOR.

No, I consult them both,---for he, who ventur'd
Thus to disarm his friend, shall do him justice ;
Or, if he fails,---to the wide world, declare
By his death here,---how much he priz'd your
safety.

MOROC.

[*Aside.*] Now for a wile, most opportunely offer'd.
[*Aloud.*] Do you not hear Aghenor,---back his
sword.---

I do at last repent ;---hence, from my hand,
Vile instrument !---

AGHENOR.

I am amaz'd !

SERJESTAN.

What means
This sudden change ?---speak, if you can, Aghenor.

MOROC.

MOROC.-

Give back the sword ;---or prince, accept of mine.
And to be just, inflict the death I merit,
Thus on my knee implor'd.

SERJESTAN.

Fresh wonder still !

This looks not like a murderer ;---unarm'd,
To run into my pow'r !---nay, and to kneel
Thus for thy death !---rise and explain at full
Whence, who, and what thou art ?

MOROC.

A murd'rer,--one

Repenting in the dust,---who cannot speak
For very shame ;---then spare me, much wrong'd
youth,
The bitter task of saying who I am,
And read it in my face.

SERJESTAN.

As I have life,

'Tis Sardis' slave !---Aghenor, that haft eyes,
Look on him ;---is't not he ?

AGHENOR.

That face was once
The face of Moroc.---Speak,---what brought thee
hither,
On this accurs'd design ?

MOROC.

Accursed thou !

Who, like to that arch tempter Christians talk of,
Draw'ft into sin but to desert thy followers !---
Call

Call me,----to finish thy diffimulation,
 Murderer !---monster !---rebel !---villain !---traitor !
 Such as I am ;---yet stand prepar'd to hear me,
 Send them all back, to him who best shall bear 'em.

AGHENOR.

I am astonish'd !

SERJESTAN.

If you have your tongue,
 Tell me, what means all this ?

MOROC.

Oh ! worthy youth,
 Though I deserve to die ;---yet, wave my death,
 Till I have made some recompence,---the all
 Left in my pow'r,---by setting forth, who spurr'd
 me

On to this deed.

SERJESTAN.

Speak ;---but be brief and honest.

MOROC.

Then to be both ;---the tempter was Aghenor :---
 Certain I am of death,---and I repeat
 Once more the villain's name :---your instrument
 Is in his hand,---that so my sword might better
 Do its fell purpose ;---but the means agreed on
 For your destruction,--the wise heav'ns have baffled.
 Let me in death have all my tortures doubled,
 If I have now spoke false.

SERJESTAN.

Aghenor,---why
 Stand *you* thus silent ?

AGHE-

AGHENOR.-

Sure as heav'n is heav'n,
I am struck dumb,---and have forbore to speak,
Knowing not what to say.

SERJESTAN.

To say, my brother?---
Wrong not thy friend, so far as to suppose,
But that he holds thee as thou art;---if guilty,
Guilty of too much love.

AGHENOR.

You are too good,
And, in the friendship of a brother, grant me
More than I ask:---your guard, with speed call
hither,
And to their charge commit this worst of ruffians.
I, as if guilty, will myself surrender .
Into the hands of justice,---and abide
Th' awarded punishment, if I am found
Th' abettor of his crimes:---in this you must not
Stay my demand. [souds.]

SERJESTAN.

Be this disgrace, the portion
Of your accuser:---grief would surely kill me,
Seeing my brother bound.---Oh! my Aghenor,
If I refuse thee this,---'tis the least proof
Of my unbounded love;---and, when before
My father's bar of justice, this offender
Holds up his hand,---Aghenor shall appear
An honourable evidence:---by heav'n,

This

This I will do;---and from my soul, I swear,---
Much am I griev'd;---I can perform no more.

MOROC.

If I have further leave——

SERJESTAN.

Where is our guard?

AGHENOR.

By our past friendship,---I request you'd hear him,
Since, from my soul, I dare defy his malice.---
If you refuse,---think how the world will construe,
Fond as men are of calumny, ---your goodness.
It will be said,---your love, and not my innocence,
Sav'd me from death:---think fir on this, and hear
him.

MOROC.

I see you look consent:---your friend, great prince,
Urg'd me from secret motives to this murder,
And for reward, swore solemnly by Rhea,
He would afford me the glad means of flying
Back to Indostan,---where,---oh sad remembrance!
I have now living, a dear wife and children,
Torn from this yearning heart:---your guard
approaches,
I have spoke truly,---and abide by it.

SERJESTAN. AGHENOR. MOROC. OFFICER.

GUARDS.

SERJESTAN.

Captain, I charge you with a pris'ner here:---
Look to the affassin well.

D

Mo-

MOROC.

If you would do
Your duty, fir,---lay hands upon Aghenor,
Whom---as I am to die, and answer for it,
I charge as my abettor.

AGHENOR.

I am ready.

SERJESTAN.

Away with him to prison :—come Aghenor.

OFFICER.

Aghenor is accus'd :—disarm *him* straight.—
He is my pris'ner too.

SERJESTAN.

Villains stand off.—

Why, officer is this ?

OFFICER.

I must intreat
Your pardon, fir,——I know my duty well,
And but perform it now.

AGHENOR.

I will myself
Give up the sword,---there, take it fir,---and prince
Stay me not here,——for I resolve to go.

SERJESTAN.

When I command,—what slave dares disobey ?
Draw off your guard.—What has Aghenor done,
To countenance this deed ?

OFFI-

OFFICER.

Upon the charge
Alledg'd against him,—I proceed thus far.

SERJESTAN.

The charge is false.

OFFICER.

I will believe it so,
But yet, must do my orders ;---and those are,
To seize on all, may harm your highness' person.
This man, by you accus'd,—in equal sort
Charges your friend :—it were a crime, for which
My head perhaps would answer,——should I dare
To disobey the king.

AGHENOR.

You shall not need
To risque your life for me : [*to Serj.*] be satisfied,
'Tis but a day or two of needful absence,
When I shall stand before the seat of judgment,
Make known my innocence,—and quit the pris'n.

SERJESTAN.

The pris'n didst thou say ?——to pris'n, captain?
Must he to pris'n ?

OFFICER.

He must.

SERJESTAN.

Unhand him all.—
Ruffians obey ;——and know me for the son
Of Sirus,---whom you serve.——Off with these
bonds.——

And you,—unless you wish to see me mad,—
Hence with your guard ;—perform it instantly,
For by our Syria's goddesses,—I will rather
Draw down the lightning from indignant heav'n,
Than my Aghenor shall be dragg'd to pris'n.

OFFICER.

These threatnings are in vain :—the lance, you see,
Is levell'd at his breast ;—if, therefore. fir,
You should obstruct me still—I give the word,
And he is dead.

AGHENOR.

[*To the officer.*] A moment's patience, fir,
And afterwards I go.—[*to Serjestan.*] You are to
blame :

He acts but by command :—think duly, fir,
That by persisting in this ill tim'd love,
You will, yourself, drive the unwilling sword
Into my heart.—Think well, and let me go.

SERJESTAN.

What!—to a pris'n?

AGHENOR.

Yes.

SERJESTAN.

Hard word!—and shall
Thy friend then suffer this?—he must!—oh! fir,
As low as to the earth, behold me fall,
And, if you pity me, say by what means,
My friend may be releas'd from the disgrace
Of a vile dungeon:—with my life,—I swear
To answer for his flight:—grant me at least

One small request;—by this, I think the king,
As is the custom,---in the court of state,---
Hears all complaints in public :---bear us thither,
And I resign him to you.

OFFICER.

I consent
To favour you in this,---though much against
The usage of my post.

SERJESTAN.

I thank you, sir :
Come my Aghenor,---we will go together.

OFFICER.

Some with the moor to pris'n :---the rest with me.

SCENE II. *A hall of state.*

SEVERAL PETITIONERS *and* OTHERS *attending.*

PETITIONER.

After obedience made,---then is the time
To kneel with our request :---but hark ;---these
trumpets
Speak his approach.

SIRUS *enters attended.*

ATTENDANT.

Syrians make way :---the king.--
Prostrate fall down, and worship as he passes.

SIRUS.

Rise all, and, who have wrongs, approach and
speak.

PETITIONER.

Health to the king.---I am a man, sore press'd
By an unfeeling creditor,---of whom,
I stand here to complain;---and with me, join
Thousands of wretches, praying to be freed
From their distress.

SIRUS.

Relate it then at full.

PETITIONER.

There are a set of men,---whose iron hearts,
To pity shut,---most cruelly confine
Their debtors in dark dungeons:---this distress,
We lay not to our king;---but, proud of heart,
To breathe beneath a government so mild,
We own, we have a sovereign that delights
To hear and pity;---but I go too far.---

SIRUS.

Proceed with boldness:---we are pleas'd to hear
thee.

PETITIONER.

Though, with a tyrant's eye, stern law declare,
'Tis just we should be so,---let mercy, sir,
Gentler of aspect than the smiling babe,
Softens the frowning judge:---in brief to speak;
By accidents and evils unforeseen,
From affluence did I fall,---indebted much.---

My

My all I sold ;---yet, notwithstanding this,
A cruel hand robb'd me of liberty,
Leaving my wife and children to look up
For their support,---oh cruel thought!---to him,
That could afford them none.

SIRUS.

Get thee aside.---

For thy relief, and their's that suffer with thee,
Take a king's word :---there shall be order for't.
Of him, whose friends petition'd us this morning,
What have you to report ?

ATTENDANT.

My royal lord,

Enquiry has been made, of those that know
Th' unhappy pris'ner well, who from his youth
Serv'd in your wars,---till,---in his age, dismiss'd,--
Wanting the means of life,---he was compell'd
To the commission of the crime, for which
He is to die to day.

SIRUS.

What course of life

Since he was sentenc'd, has he led in pris'n ?

ATTENDANT.

Truly devout :---ev'n his whole life has been,
Bating this one offence,---so just, so good,
Those that have known him well, his fault extenuate,
Saying, had heav'n not slept, he ne'er had done it.

SIRUS.

Then be our mercy shewn :---bear instantly,
Our pleasure to the officer.---The lives

Of our liege subjects do we hold most dear ;
 And rather than cut off one guilty soul
 Who, living, might repent,---we would, with joy,
 Pardon a thousand wretches, that had fought
 To shake us on our throne,---though merciful
 Thus out of time, we should keep up the storm,
 Warring against our right.

SIRUS. ATTENDANTS. PETITIONERS. SARDIS.

SARDIS.

Health,—pow'r,—dominion,
 Conquest, obedience, and long life to Sirus,——
 Sov'reign of kings.—Henceforth, be Rimmon ever
 Worshipp'd in Syria.

SIRUS.

Whither tends thy transport ?

SARDIS.

Transport indeed !---know, mighty sir, that treason
 Gasps now on earth,---overwhelm'd with its own
 mischief :

Plainly to speak,---the murd'rer's sword, this morn-
 ing,

To your son's breast was held,---but heav'n,—in
 mercy,

Turn'd off the traitor's point ;—and, to conclude,
 Left him unhurt.

SIRUS.

Rimmon, be thine the praise.

SAR-

SARDIS.

Lo!--to confirm your joy,---the monster comes,
 Attended by your son ;---good, easy youth !
 That think'ft him free of guilt, becaufe thyself
 Haft more of human goodnefs, than to do
 So horrid an offence.——Let all depart.

[*the Attendants and Petitioners withdraw.*]

SIRUS. SARDIS. SERJESTAN. AGHENOR.
 OFFICER. *and* GUARDS.

SERJESTAN.

Justice, my lord.——I kneel, and will not rife,
 Till I obtain my fuit.

SIRUS.

Which of you here
 Enjoys his perfect fenfe ?——If I were fure,
 Thefe objects all were real,——I would dare
 To fay, that this pale wretch was my fon's friend,
 The partner of his heart,——the treasury
 Of his beft favours,——the belov'd Aghenor.

SARDIS.

I would it were not fo ;——but there he ftands,
 Lefs criminal by far,—th' infranchis'd flave
 That fhould, his facrilegious hands make red,
 In his kind mafter's blood.

SERJESTAN.

Sardis, thou lieft.—
 Age---which, to other men, comes crown'd with
 honour,—

Stamps

Stamps infamy on thee :—dost thou not dread,
 Near as thou art to death,---Jove's vengeance on
 Thy perjury,—old man?—give, give me way,
 That, with a vulture's rage, I may pluck out
 Those eye-balls from their beds,—and, by the
 roots,

Tear up, and scatter to the winds of heav'n,
 That scandalous white beard.

AGHENOR.

My honour'd lord,
 Crush not a falling man :—as I have hopes
 Of life hereafter,—murderer I am none,
 Yet, notwithstanding this,—my death,—I see,
 Is firm as the decrees of fate,—if you
 Come to accuse me here.

SIRUS *to* Aghenor.

But that I read
 Guilt written on thy cheek,—in pity, I
 Would ask if this is so.

AGHENOR.

Can Sirus then
 Condemn the accus'd unheard?—know king, I
 have

A bosom clear of guiltiness, that looks
 On punishment with scorn ; and, in the hour
 Of my impending death, conceive no pang
 At parting with the world, but as it tears
 My soul from the best friend that e'er drew breath.

SERJESTAN.

Away with ev'ry fear :—'twere villainy
 To be a coward now :—he never did,

No,

No,——never seek my life :—who dares accuse
him,
Dies like a dog this instant.

SIRUS.

Rash young man!
Take his sword from him straight.——Are you
our son,
And must the pow'r we hold, step in to save
Our Sardis from thy wrath?—Know prince, when
oft
Our kingdom has been ravag'd, and our throne
Menac'd by foreign foes,—that but for him,
Our state had been unhing'd,—and thou,—even
thou,——

Left without hopes of mounting to that seat
Thy ancestors have fill'd.——As thou dost owe
Thy welfare to thy father and thy king,
At his command be dumb.——Who's here?

[Moroc comes in guarded, and preceded by
an Officer of Justice.]

OFFICER of Justice.

The traitor
Leagu'd in Aghenor's guilt.---This paper speaks
The manner of th' attempt :---who set him on,
And by what means he fail'd :---all here,---summ'd
up,---
The pris'ner hath confess'd.

SIRUS.

'Tis well.

AGHE-

AGHENOR. -

Speak peace
To your conflicting thoughts.---Heav'n cuts me off
For some good end,---known only to his self.---
In my friend's cause to suffer,---I confess,
Ought not to give me pain.

SIRUS.

Sure providence
Has been most busy here.---Captain, a word :---
Read that, and tell us what thou know'st of all
Thou find'st related there.

SERJESTAN.

Thou art grown pale !
Talk not of death :---rather shall this my hand,
Tear by the root up, the accursed tongue
Of Sardis, that accuses thee.

OFFICER.

'Tis true ;---
These eyes can witness, that the prince's sword
Was in Aghenor's hand !---and he, disarm'd.

SIRUS.

Too plain ;---too plain :---besides, it was foretold
That this foul murder, by a kindred hand,
Would be attempted ;---and that kindred hand,
Proves to be his ;---for,---with a blush I own,
So has my love been blind ;---Aghenor was
Almost to me a child,---and, to my son,
More than of kin.---You, Moroc, we forgive,
That in the deed relented.---Take him hence
To the state prison, till, in course of law,

He

He may our pardon plead :—but, for this wretch,
 Made nameless by his guilt,—bear him in haste
 To the dark dungeon in St. Salum's mosque;
 There let him lie, and gnaw his bonds with anguish,
 Till preparation's made for public justice,
 Then drag him to his fate.

[Aghenor *departs guarded.*]

SERJESTAN.

Oh! call him back :

Still have I left, a thousand things to urge
 In his behalf.—This ignominious death,
 If but in pity to your son,—prevent.—
 Yet call him back;—upon my knees,—good
 friends,
 Join in my pray'rs;—and, Sardis, kneel thou
 too.—

His be my birthright, that shall save Aghenor.

SARDIS.

Obedient to the prince,—'tis my request,
 That pity may be shown :—if, granting this,
 Aghenor should be spar'd, to execute
 The deed a safer way upon your son;—
 Still,—of his death, sweet mercy was the cause :—
 And, when you so forgave,—your nature rose
 From human to divine;—a thought, that's full
 Of sov'reign balm for ev'ry worldly woe.

SERJESTAN.

He never did attempt upon the life
 Of his dear friend.—The thought alone, that death
 Stealing along with age, must come at last,

And

And I, perhaps, drop first ;—his mighty love,
No time could teach to bear :—oh ! then, dread
 sir,

If he must die,—he dies a guiltless lamb,——
A sacrifice,——for ends most damnable,——
To those that plot his fall ;——and I,—your son,
Bereft of all I love,——must follow what
I cannot long survive ;——and surely now,
The tide about my heart, hath reach'd the ebb,
And mark where it must stop.

SIRUS.

Be near :—he faints.

Break not my heart :—heav'n only knows,—how
 much,

How tenderly I love.——When thou shalt have
A child thyself,---of thy own flesh,---the offspring,
Then mayst thou guess th' affection of a father.
Ask not his life,---for whilst he lives,---most surely,
Dreading thy death,---will apprehension kill me.

SARDIS. *Aside.*

Sirus, I fear, relents.

SIRUS.

Where wouldst thou go ?

SERJESTAN.

First to bid farewell to my friend ;---where next,
Jove only knows.

SIRUS.

What can I do, Serjestan ?

Justice, not Sirus, has condemn'd Aghenor.

SER-

SERJESTAN.

Justice would save him :----you, it is, condemn
him.

Heav'n to the guilty, is more rich in mercy ;
Nor at the heel of the offender, follows
With the red bolt ; —— but Sirus hears and
punishes,

E'er 'tis well known, what justice can determine.

SIRUS.

Then I conceive some hope :---that thou mayst
know,

How far the love of thy fond father yields,
Till ev'ning he shall live ; —— e'er five, my son,
Fashion the means to prove him innocent,
And he is safe :---if not,---thou must acknowledge
His punishment then just.

SERJESTAN.

I ask no more ;

And, as the lark who, with returning day,
Greets a dark world,---the herald of glad news,
I fly to find him out. [departs.]

SIRUS.

On officer,

And, with our respite, follow to the prison
Whither Serjestan goes.---The rest lead on.

SARDIS. *Alone.*

Till ev'ning he shall live ; and after that,
If innocent,---as long as till the thread

Of

Of nature is worn out.---The knowledge of
That innocence,---a dagger shall suppress ;
For, in the breast of Moroc, it lies hid,
And must be bury'd there.---I have begun,---
And sea-man like,---who,---when the winds blow
loud,---

Returns not to the shallows he has left,
Must wade it through or sink.---Oh ! for a thought,
To make death still *more* certain :---he *must* die ;
For, in his life,---as in a stream,---disturb'd
By the rude wind,---my safety shews its self,
Like a distorted picture :---this my brain,
What it first plann'd so well, must still maintain.

A C T

A C T III.

S C E N E I. *A dungeon.*

ORIXA.

HEAV'N guard my trembling steps through
all these horrors,

To my Aghenor's arms.----Afflicted mourner,
Upon what stone,---hard pillow for thy sorrows!
Mak'st thou thy bed;---and, as the moments pass
thee,---

Numb'ring for each a groan, anxiously wait'st
For my approach.--I come,--I come,--but heav'ns!
How?---and to whom?---A murd'rer!--and to one
I have destroy'd!--Oh! let Aghenor suffer,
Rather than know the folly of Orix.

ORIXA. AGHENOR.

AGHENOR.

Who names Orix and the man of sorrows,
Joining 'em thus?---my wife!--how can'st thou
hither?

ORIXA.

Oh! I am sick at heart;---Heav'ns preserve safe,
In his distress, the reason of Aghenor!--
Dost thou avoid my arms!

E

AGHE.

AGHENOR.

Retire, and leave me :
I would be private now.---

ORIXA.

My fears,---alas!---
Have then become too true.---Thou art distract,
And knowest not thou'rt speaking to Orixia.

AGHENOR.

Too well!---too well!---would I had never seen
thee.

ORIXA.

Oh ! I confess myself much chang'd since morning ;
So have my eyes been lib'ral of their tears,
Weeping for thee ;---yet, tho' my outward form
Hastes to its wane,---accessions of new love
Throng to my heart ;---and, as descending rains
Burst the full banks,---ev'n so, my lab'ring bosom
Swell'd with the load of tenderness that's in it,
Throbs to find vent for what *will* have its passage.

AGHENOR.

Oh!---thou art all---a bridegroom can desire,
From the soft clasps of his love sick'ning maid,
Yet unenjoy'd.---Add not to my distress,
That most afflicting curse,---the curse of thinking ;
I can esteem thee other than a spirit,
Worthy to be ador'd :---but thou shalt know
What causes my distress.---Seest thou this place ?
'Tis the dark road to death :---all I have left,
Of my short journey through the vale of life,
Should

Should be employ'd above :---who, set apart
 As victims here, their dissolution wait,
 Should think upon their sins :---but I,---oh grief!
 Think but on thee;---when I would breathe a
 pray'r,
 Half way it mounts to heav'n, then down again,
 Comes with my soul to anchor upon thee,
 And all is left undone.

ORIXA.

 If it be so,
 Thou shouldst indeed detest me;---for,---methinks,
 Now, I detest myself.——Let me be gone
 Far as I can, as far as space has being,
 Rather than press on thy afflicted soul,
 Seeking to mount.

AGHENOR.

 Pardon my sudden starts;
 Seal my forgiveness;—and be near me still.
 There is a kind of virtue, in the love
 Paid to so fair a form:——and oh!—if ever,
 Ever thou meantst thy poor Aghenor well,
 Up to the gods send thy devout request,
 For his soul's peace:—thy goodness shall give
 wings
 To thy just pray'rs; and, at the throne of heav'n,
 Plead with persuasive force,—till all are granted.

ORIXA.

Never, Aghenor.——These unhallow'd arms,
 Wouldst thou approach,—they ne'er shall close
 about thee;

I,—in my turn,—will frown thee from thy purpose,

When thou draw'st near, to rest thee on my bosom.

AGHENOR.

Heav'n give thee peace.—Withdraw my love and quit me.

ORIXA.

Not till the guilt I groan with, is unfolded.—
Oh! you might die, and never know the secret;
Yet,---to deserve of heav'n and you, forgiveness,
Must I reveal it all.---'Tis I,---Aghenor,——
I—that have ruin'd thee.

AGHENOR.

'Tis *thou* hast ruin'd me!

ORIXA.

Curs'd be the cause of this day's guilt and sorrow!

AGHENOR.

Amen to that, since I am torn from thee.

ORIXA:

Now art thou just;—for oh!—with shame I speak
it!

I am alone the object of thy curses.

AGHENOR.

Sure thou grow'st wild!—retire, my love, I beg
thee.——

Bid me farewell, and go.—

ORIXA.

Was not the slave,
Moroc,—my father's bondman,—thy accuser?

ACHE-

AGHENOR.

Yes :—what of that ?—why dost thou ask the question ?

ORIXA.

Oh !—I am curs'd beyond the pow'r of utt'rance.

AGHENOR.

Do not say so.—Thou hast the pow'r of blessing ;—
Bless me, and say farewell ;——to tarry longer
Here in this cell,—might hurry thee to madness.—

ORIXA.

Just e'er I left my father,——when *we* parted ;
I,—to excuse my marriage with Serjestan,——
For, on a child's obedience, he enjoin'd me,
Truly to speak the secrets of my bosom,——
Told him,—with all my sex's fears about me,—
Fool that I was !—my heart was in thy keeping.

AGHENOR.

Ha !

ORIXA.

And had he but vouchsaf'd me further hearing,
Certain,—I think the secret of our marriage
He had known too :—then, sure as heav'n's above
us,

Moroc has been stubborn'd to make thee guilty.

AGHENOR.

But,---for what cause !---away, nor so much wrong
Sardis' great worth :---could he of this be guilty,---
Could thy good father,---from the height of virtue,
Fall so in sin,——th' inferior pow'rs of heav'n,

Might the allegiance, due to him that thunders,
Shake off most bravely and incur destruction.---
Hark!--I am summon'd.---

ORIXA. [*a noise without, like the
beaving back of bolts.*]

Where?

AGHENOR.

To execution.

ORIXA.

Horrible word!--is there no way to save thee?

AGHENOR.

None but to die.---

ORIXA.

And must we part then? must we?

AGHENOR.

The hour is come.---Grieve not for me:---I suffer
In my friend's cause;---and therefore die with
pleasure.

ORIXA.

But for thy wife!--what, what must be *her* por-
tion!

AGHENOR.

Oh thou unkind one!--why hast thou call'd back
Sad recollection?---I had almost learn'd
How from the heights of virtuous resolution,
Full of indiff'rence,---to look down on ruin:---
All is now chang'd,---terrible thoughts assail me,
Death!--and this instant!--endless separation!
Are there in language, other words of horror
Equal to these?---oh! my Orix, save me:

Screen

Screen me from thought ;---pluck, pluck me from
reflection ;---

Being but man, I cannot brave their terrors.

AGHENOR. ORIXA. SERJESTAN.

SERJESTAN.

Where is my friend ?——Ha !—do I wake or no ?
What means this dreadful vision that enchants me ?

AGHENOR.

'Tis my friend's voice !---the voice of my Serjestan !

SERJESTAN.

Waking and sensible !—'Tis all delusion !
Speak,—you that are not under such amazement :
Speak, if you can,—and say with whom I'm talk-
ing.

AGHENOR.

With your lost friend.—With me.—With your
Aghenor.

SERJESTAN.

With my lost friend !—either my sight or hearing
Suffers enchantment, and deceives me mainly.---
Which shall I trust ?——if this be not a vision,
Here let me die ;——for life will be a burthen,
Knowing I'm thus abus'd.

AGHENOR.

Abus'd thou art not.

Be but thyself to listen to my story,
And thou shalt own, that I have never wrong'd
thee.

SERJESTAN.

Insolent wretch !——that thou hast never wrong'd
me ?——

Then, if thou canst,—for I behold thine eye-balls
Fix'd on the hell beneath, to which thou'rt going,
Look on Orixia ;——on that heav'n of beauty ;
And, to my question, give me a just answer :
Hast thou not wrong'd me there ?

AGHENOR.

If thou wilt hear me ;
What I can say, will prove I have not wrong'd
thee.

SERJESTAN.

Matchless dissembler !——in the lap of beauty
Sleep'st thou so sound,----that thy approaching
danger,

Warns thee in vain to sue for Jove's forgiveness.
Will not that spirit, that at first seduc'd thee,
Tell thee,——for thy apostacy, atchiev'd
So soon,——th' infernals shall despair of nothing,
E'er the night come, thou dy'st ?——hear it from
me then :——

E'er the night come, disgraceful death attends thee ;
Shame in this life, and endless woes hereafter.
Use then my counsel, and implore heav'n's mercy,
Thankful that this my hand,——foolish remorse
Binds up, from writing the deserv'd decree
Of justice in thy blood.

OFFICER *entering*.

The king, Aghenor,
Stays, at the prince's suit, thy execution
Till the fifth hour.—This respite is allow'd thee,
That,—being guiltless of the crime thou'rt charg'd
with,
Proof may be found: *that* failing, thou must suffer.

SERJESTAN.

Bear back the respite:—-I revoke my pity.

OFFICER.

Your highness's excuse for my presumption;
'Tis the king's mandate, and must be deliver'd.---
[*goes out.*]

SERJESTAN *to Orixia, offering to speak.*

Kneel not fair excellence.---Some other time
I may in transports hang upon thy accents;
Framing my soul to take in all their sweetness.---
But for the present,——other passions govern:---
Let me be gone:---indeed, you must not hold me,
For,---though I could eternally gaze on thee,
And, with a greedy eye, explore new beauties
Fair as what now I see,——ev'n in Elysium,
I should lie bound upon a wheel of torment,
Sharing with *him*, the joys of that blest'd region.

AGHENOR. ORIXA.

ORIXA.

Is there no pity then?----Curfes pursue,
And overtake thy steps.

AGHE-

AGHENOR.

Wrong him not so ;
 I,---and I only,---have deserv'd those curses.---
 False to my friendship,---when he nam'd his passion,
 Did I, these lips pollute with vilest falsehood,
 Speaking a language differing from my bosom :
 Lo!--now for this,---deservedly I suffer ;
 Had I avow'd my flame, he would have dy'd,
 Giv'n up his hopes, and pin'd with secret longings,
 Rather than wound his friend ;---whilst, righteous
 heav'ns !

This, my just punishment, had never happen'd.

ORIXA.

I have a thousand thousand things to utter ;
 But,---oh the grief!--in spite of Sirus' mercy,
 Death must stop short my tale :---till five!--oh
 niggard!--

But till the setting sun!--Why should thy bounty
 End with the day ?

AGHENOR.

Most kindly dost thou warn me.
 And, by the goodness of eternal mercy,
 To my short span,---three hours,---my friend has
 added ;---
 Sure, for some end.—Whilst I am bless'd with life,
 Let me not breathe in vain.---Fly then in haste ;
 Fly to thy father ;---cherubs, to thy speed
 Give all their wings, and to thy tongue, persuasion :
 Fall on thy knee---

ORIXA.

ORIXA.

Waste not the time in telling.
 Hence will I go,—and try all means to save thee,
 As I were pleading for my soul's salvation,
 In the great eye of Jove.—Our little infant,
 He shall kneel with me too :—the gentle baby,
 Shall my good Straticee,—with expedition
 Bring from his nurse :—mean while, pray thou,
 Aghenor,
 For my success, and this short farewell take,
 Till I again come back.

AGHENOR.

With all the wings
 Of expedition,—fail not to return.

ORIXA.

Oh doubt it not.—With all the wings of love.

AGHENOR.

My heart goes with thee :—fight is all the sense
 I can use now :—my straining eyes pursue thee :
 One,—one look more, and now, thou vanishest.
 Oh for kind sleep, to drown the pain of thought !

SCENE II. *The house of Sardis.*

SARDIS. SERJESTAN.

SARDIS. *Aside.*

More than I hop'd !—this circumstance improv'd,
 Shall to his murder lead.

SER-

SERJESTAN.

Yet tell me this :

If,—as you say,---the knowledge of their loves
Came to your ear this morning,---why not urge it,
When at the bar?—his guilt had then been cer-
tain.

SARDIS.

Therefore I did it not :—proofs strong enough,
Rose of his crime ;—and, to have urg'd his fate
Then, had been cruelty.

SERJESTAN.

And can you, sir,
Pardon the crime of my misjudging love,
When we last met ;—for passion rising then,
As reason grew subdu'd, coin'd what I spoke,
To anger my best friend.

SARDIS.

Why dost thou urge
The thing I would not hear ?—ev'n then, my
prince,

As I do now,——I fed each faculty
Of pity and surprize ;——my wrath lay dead.---
I wonder'd when I saw, that one so young
Could, to a pitch of more than Roman friendship,
Find out the way,---and wept, to think your love
Had been so much misplac'd.

SERJESTAN.

Oh my great loss !
In his revolt,——the noblest breast fell from me ;
For,

For, to my heart, he was fame,---honour,---life,---
He was myself.---Th' unfeather'd tender brood,
That by the parent pelican, is fed
With her own blood,---could never be more dear
To the life yielding bird.

SARDIS.

Upon this theme,
Dwell we no more;---since, all the guilt within
him,

Heav'n has divulg'd :---sure he protects you highly
From that worst foe of man,---that fury, ven-
g'ance ;

Since, when you found your life had been attempted,
And the best treasure of your heart stol'n from you,
You, in that hour, could so command your passion,
That the invader wrong'd you, and not felt
What was the rage of a deluded lover.

SERJESTAN.

He is to die.---What need of further veng'ance ?

SARDIS.

So do I say.---Souls only, that love veng'ance,
Push it beyond the grave.---“ What need of
veng'ance

Further than death ?”---rebellling, to that question,
Thus says your heart :---what need of any, Sardis ?

SERJESTAN.

But if no veng'ance,---I must lose Orixia.

SARDIS.

Grant she is lost ;---shall then a foolish woman
Weigh down the beam, when pois'd against your
honour ; And

And shall the charms, that fade away like blossoms,
 Lure you to pleasures,---whilst the modest matron,
 Virtue,---with graces exquisite and lasting,
 Is not allow'd a tongue?---What is it makes,
 Think you so fam'd, the Roman magnanimity?
 What?---but a just contempt of nature's dictates,
 Shown by their trampling upon all her frailties.---
 One gives a father up;---a son, another;
 This, in a noble frenzy, fools call madness,
 Stabs his own mother;---or, despising pity,
 In the soft bosom of a wife, or daughter,
 Plunges his sword, and grows immortal by it.

SERJESTAN.

Oh thou speak'st daggers to relenting nature!
 Perish the thought!--I must not,---cannot lose her.

SARDIS.

I'm sorry to hear this:---think better of it.
 And to convince you, how the heav'ns are interested
 In your resolves,---I have, my prince, to tell
 you,
 Sirus relents, and may be wrought to save him:
 Instantly then determine *you* to pardon,
 I will go seek the king,---and, speaking for you,
 Second the mercy to restore Aghenor.

SERJESTAN.

But of Crixia?

SARDIS.

Nay;---you must not hope
 She may be yours;---to your friend's life and
 pardon,

You

You must add her ;---in goodness, would you bargain ?

Stipulate terms ?——and sell instead of giving ?

Be it not so :——resign her freely to him,

And, with his life,---present him what can only

Make the gift rich :——let me intreat it of you.

SERJESTAN.

Is it a sin then to use ev'ry weapon,

Fighting with death ?---for oh ! I die without her !

SARDIS.

'Tis a sad thought indeed !---but for your virtue,

What is too painful ?——take my friendly counsel,

Ages unborn---shall praise you for your goodness,

To the last hour of time ;---and for Aghenor,

When in the arms of his belov'd Orixia,

Oh my poor child !---he feasts himself with sweetness,

Rev'ling all night beside the turf thou sleep'st on,

Spite of himself,---he shall, of force, be grateful,

And, o'er thy tomb, record this great inscription :

“ Here lies the man, that dy'd to make me happy.”

SERJESTAN.

Swords in my heart,---compar'd to what thou
utter'st,—

Probe with less pain !---oh villain !---monstrous
villain !

Triumph not long,---for veng'ance overtakes thee.

SARDIS.

Sirus,---the king,---shall save him from that ven-
g'ance.

SER-

SERJESTAN.

Shall he then live?---shall murder pass unpunish'd?
What then becomes of me?

SARDIS.

Better by far,
Murder should 'scape,---than thou be guilty of it.

SERJESTAN.

Hah!--dost thou say,---“ than I be guilty of it?”
Apt to conceive,---I take thee at thy word,---
And he is dead,---if thou but aid'ft me in it.

SARDIS.

Save me, great Jove, from an offence so deadly!
What will this prove?---I thought you mention'd
murder;

Yea, my good prince, the murd'ring of Aghenor,
And for that reason, thought to stay your purpose.

SERJESTAN.

Then must he live!

SARDIS.

And does not heav'n decree it?
Or for what purpose was't, that your resentments,
When you last saw him, slept:---some guardian
goddess
Watches his steps,---or your late means of ven-
g'ance,

Breathless, e'er this, had left him in the prison.

SERJESTAN.

Be it then so:---that will be noble veng'ance!---
Me, he offended;---mine be then the office,

Hold-

Holding the scales, to plunge the sword of justice,
Deep in his heart ----and now, I go to do it.---
Foolish remorse lie still!----horrible fancies,
Back to the damn'd!---What means this start of
conscience?---

I am stopp'd short!---some supernat'ral pow'r
Bars me my way!---it is the dread suggestion
Of my appalling guilt:---the guilt of murder!---
Murder a wretch, the grave already yawns for!
Horrid offence!---murder my friend!---was't so?
Did you say murder him?

SARDIS.

Pardon me, prince,
In your distraction, you mistake my purpose.
Would he might live;---it were a thought of child-
hood,

Should I conceive, an old man's foolish counsel
Able to work *him* on, whose hand, from veng'ance,
Honour restrain'd:---so far from naming murder,--
Be but yourself, and you must then remember,
How,---after death,---I wish'd the stone above you,
Might to the world display this glorious trophy:
“ Here lies the man, who dy'd to make me happy.”

SERJESTAN.

Once more I'm whole,---and palling resolution
Back to her seat returns.---Give,---give me ven-
g'ance,

Dear to my bosom, as the bridegroom's clasp
To the love sick'ning maid.

F

SAR-

SARDIS.

For the gods' sake!

SERJESTAN.

Off!---let me go:---my wrath delay'd, will burst
me.——

I am all flame!---and like the bearded comet,
Sweep to destruction ev'ry thing before me!
Hark!---how the furies,---filling the wide region,
Howl for their prey!---bear me to instant ven-
geance;

Lift me from earth,---and with your ebon pinions,
Waft me aloft to satisfy your hunger,
Now---now I go!---villain! thou dy'st this moment.

SARDIS. *Alone.*

Excellent fool!---why go,---and let this madness
Quit not the strong dominion it holds o'er thee,
Till it be done.---If, by remorse affected,
Say he should fail,---the guilt and danger of it
Fall not on me.---The moor is safe in pris'n,
And, his corrupted keeper, to my service
Strongly attach'd;--till there is danger in him,
Shall he not die.

SARDIS. ORIXA,

SARDIS.

My child!---whence com'st thou hither?
Sad and in tears!—give me, ye gods, your patience.
By Jupiter, there's not a foul in Syria,

But

But should rejoice,---the treason of Aghenor
Brought so to light:---think of thyself more nobly,
Than to devote the waste of all thy sorrows,
Thus to a wretch, whose life is claim'd by justice,

ORIXA.

Talk not of justice, fir,---he dies unjustly.---
And if you e'er have lov'd a wretched daughter,
Use all your pow'r with Sirus for his ransom,
If you would save your child from dying with him.

SARDIS.

See my eyes well!---Sure, thou wert ne'er Orixal

ORIXA.

Sore am I fet with grief, and therefore frown not;
For, in my heart lives that, will make your anger
Fall to the ground, an unavailing trifle,
Poor and of no account.---The greater sorrow
Spurns at the less.---By all the gods I charge you,
Snatch him from death, and with him snatch your
daughter;

For, not in art or nature, shall be found
One blessed med'cine to keep death aloof,
If he must die.---We both must end together:
Save then Aghenor, and save me your child:---
And, if the gift of life may be allow'd him,
He, to deserve it, shall depart from Syria,
Banish'd from me, and from the prince Serjestan.
Where the necessity of fate shall never
Force him to shed the blood to Sirus precious.

SARDIS.

Rise to my arms, and think me still thy father :
Need I adjure the gods to witness for me,
How much I love my child?---to thee, let Sardis
Equal be dear ;---nor that,--to make him wretched,
Ask as the terms of life, he cannot grant thee.

ORIXA.

I know you have a pow'r to plead it strongly,
Therefore, the all I can, shall be exerted :
Which,—if it fails,---heav'n must have mercy on
me.——

Where is my Achmet?——

SARDIS. ORIXA. STRATICEE. ACHMET.

ORIXA.

Lo!---I have a seraph !
He shall intreat you.---Go, my pretty baby,—
Go, and lift up thy little hands for mercy,
Hang on his knee, and soothe him from his stern-
ness,
With thy sweet smiles that might disarm a tyrant.
Art thou afraid?—he will not chide thee from him :
Mine, though thou art,—thou shar'ft not my
offences :
He will be good to thee,—however cruel
To his own child.

SARDIS.

Heav'ns !--what means this, Orixal

ORIXA.

ORIXA.

Think not his birth has stain'd my sex's honour;
 I am his father's wife, and this poor infant
 Bore in a holy bed.—My secret marriage,
 If thou forgive,—and, for the love once born me,
 Foster my child when I'm at rest for ever,
 (Since 'tis in vain to hope my husband's pardon;)
 All will be well:—I shall expire with pleasure:
 Take him then, sir.—The peaceful plains of Tigris,
 Where he was born, and since has been secreted,
 Where my lov'd lord and I have tasted pleasures,
 Stol'n though they were,—have in his gentle
 nature

Planted no vice.—Farewel my boy for ever.
 Ne'er mayst thou know the guilt thy father dies for,
 Nor be acquainted with thy mother's sorrows.

SARDIS.

Child of my bowels! [*aside.*] Oh!—where's now
 Serjeftan.

ORIXA.

Sure you relent!—if so,—again the pavement
 Shall my knees press, in favour of my husband:
 Blame not my love,—'tis short of what he merits;
 Nor, to the pray'r I make, be deaf,—but save him:
 Save him from death, and to his banishment
 Take my consent;—I will not murmur at it.
 But, to my fate resign'd,—to that which must be,
 I and my lord will part;—and, when on Syria
 Turning his back,—we separate for ever,—

Hence, to some mosque, your wretched child shall
wander,

And, on her knees, consum'd with pray'r and fasting,
Beg her release, by death, from all her sorrows.

SARDIS.

Oh my poor child ! no more with these complain-
ings,

Wound the relenting bosom of thy father !

Fly to the prison ;---fly ;---oh ! fly ;---and quickly ;

Happ'ly thou mayst arrive to stay the mischief

Threatning Aghenor ;——for Serjestan left me

Just e'er thou enter'dst, and with wrath so heated,

That if it lasts,—he may attempt to slay him.

Tell him what danger,—by a web suspended,—

Hangs o'er his head ;—and also, to Serjestan,

Say that for divers reasons of great moment,

Weightier than life or honour,—I conjure him,

Not to proceed, if aught, against Aghenor,

He hath devis'd.—Myself will straight to Sirus,

And for his life make strong solicitation,

As 'twere my own ;—stay not, but fly this instant.

A C T

A C T IV.

S C E N E I. *The dungeon.*

AGHENOR. SERJESTAN.

SERJESTAN *entering.*

THUS am I here;—and lo!—as if my
purpose
Met with heav'n's smile,—behold I find him sleep-
ing.—

Come forth, thou dear companion of my bosom;
Come forth, and do it now:—soft, soft; no noise;
If he awakes, he prays to Jove for pardon;
So, of my vengeance, more than half its measure
Falls to the ground:—why does my hand thus
tremble?

Why, to my heart, flows back the curdling tor-
rent?

Why is all this?—I'll walk aside, and gather
Fresh resolution.—When, with anguish, waking,
Sudden he starts,—to his one groan,—for only
Once shall he groan,—will I exclaim damnation.
Now, now I do't.—This to thy soul.—What's
here?

What's in this paper?—'Tis the slave's confession,

Penn'd in the coward moment of repentance.

I will enjoy it. [*reads.*] "To my wife, Orixia."

[*speaks.*] Wife!—to my wife!—great powers! if
this be real,

How am I curs'd!—but hope persuades me other.

[*reads.*] "Where art thou gone?—pass by me, a

"few moments,

"And I am dead:---if, therefore, I must never,

"Never!—from the despair couch'd in that word,

"Heav'ns guard my soul!—never again behold

"thee;—

"Take the last counsel of the man, whose bosom

"Beats but to thee."—[*speaks.*] Thus goes it on,---

[*reads.*] "I charge you,

"When I am dead,---and 'tis my last petition:—

"Think not unkindly of my friend Serjestan."

[*speaks.*] Prays he for me?---[*reads.*] "Jove, be

"thou gracious to him,

"And, at my death, I will avouch thy justice;

"Since it is certain, if I had not meanly

"Kept from my friend the knowledge of my
passion,

"When he his own divulg'd."---[*speaks.*] Heav'n
will, I fear,

Make this the last of happy moments to me;

If it be so,——how strong art thou temptation!---

This can do justice still: but, to what follows.---

[*reads.*] "This were prevented all.---With my last
breath

"Might I the heav'ns intreat for one, one blessing,

"It

" It should be this :---That thy transcendent merit

" Crown'd my Serjeſtan's bed, who, of his good-

" neſs,

" Would for thy ſake, protect my friendleſs in-

" fant."-----

[*ſpeaks.*] Triple deſpair,---ſure he awakes.---I'll
finiſh,

For 'tis my pennance now.---[*reads.*] " To heav'n

" I leave thee ;

" And for my child,---the laſt and only legacy

" Left in thy father's pow'r, he freely gives thee :

" Jove will be good to thy defenceleſs innocence :

" Train'd in the paths of virtue, grow to manhood ;

" And a bright copy of thy mother's goodneſs,

" All ſhall acknowledge thee.---Immortal heav'ns,"

AGHENOR *waking.*

What do I ſee ?

SERJESTAN, *falling on the ground.*

Oh horror !---oh Aghenor !

AGHENOR.

What means this viſion that affails my ſenſes ?

Surely the voice I hear, was once Serjeſtan's.

SERJESTAN.

Steal on me deafneſs, I grow ſtiff with horrors.

AGHENOR.

Yes, 'tis his ſelf.---But wherefore this diſorder ?

Why art thou proſtrate on the earth's hard boſom ?

Hah !---with a dagger !---heav'ns avert all danger !

Why doſt thou groan thus ?---why thus heave thy
boſom ?

Look

Look up my friend and speak in pity to me;
 Speak to Aghenor:—to the man that loves thee.

SERJESTAN.

Torture past bearing!---to the man that loves me!

AGHENOR.

Yes; and with fondness equal to a mother's:
 Rise then and tell me what disturbs thy bosom.

SERJESTAN.

Not for the world.—My secret oath is taken,
 Never again to look on thee, most injur'd.

AGHENOR.

Injur'd, I am not.—Well, I know thy meaning.
 If, at the moment when thy frailty govern'd,
 Thou hast done that which fills thee now with for-
 row,

With that *one* fault, but balance *my* offences,
 And they shall sink, as pois'd against a feather
 Would the great globe.—'Tis I, that am the
 spoiler

Of my friend's peace, whose heart, I fear, is
 breaking.

SERJESTAN.

Vainly thou seek'st to varnish my offences,
 E'er they are known:---when known, thou wilt
 detest 'em.

Surely thou wert inspir'd to write that paper.

AGHENOR.

Then thou know'st all that gives thy friend afflic-
 tion.

Oh my poor wife! and lamb-like gentle infant!

Wilt

Wilt thou, my prince, of thy unbounded goodness,
Give them to taste, when husband, friend, and
father,

Is in the grave?—If this, thou do but promise,
How am I blest'd; and, by that God whose know-
ledge

Reads ev'ry heart,——I merit all thy pity.

For, though I fear'd the secret of my passion
Would, if reveal'd, have torn Orixia from me;
Into my heart, the horrid guilt of murder
Never once came.—Nor, to have gain'd Elysium,
Would I have wrong'd the man, whose passing
goodness,

Made my life sweet to breathe it for him only.

SERJESTAN.

Torture on torture!——To the cruel talons
Of a starv'd tiger,——such a one as I am,——
Wouldst thou commit thy lambs? how shall their
innocence

Plead for defence against the strong invader?
When, by dire passion, goaded on to vengeance,
Thirsting for blood,—the blood that never wrong'd
me,——

Hither I came to murder my Aghenor!

AGHENOR.

Must I give ear to this?

SERJESTAN.

Thou see'st my dagger.

AGHE-

76 THE FRIENDS.

AGHENOR.

True, my dear prince,—yet, that cries not against thee.

No; for 'twere sin, eternal pains could only
Punish enough, to think thou wert so guilty.
In thy good heart, ne'er dwelt the crime of murder.

SERJESTAN.

Engines and wheels rack less than so much goodness!

AGHENOR.

Oh! now I think,—and kiss thy friendly offer;
Sure my dull brain was wrapp'd in thickest darkness,

Or, at the first, I had divin'd thy goodness,
Fall'n on my knees, receiv'd and thank'd thee for it.

SERJESTAN.

Thank'd me?—for what?—I fear thou go'st distracted.

AGHENOR.

Own thou art come to snatch thy friend Aghenor
From a disgraceful death,—to tell him, better
Were it to die self-murder'd, than be pity'd
By a base herd.—I thank thee for thy counsel;
And if my innocence had not, of heav'n
Made a strong friend,—would use thy gen'rous
present.

Here at my heart, that still must die thy debtor.

SER-

SERJESTAN.

Would it were so ;—but I, oh harden'd villain !
Hither repair'd, most barb'rously to slay thee ;
Nor was thy life, that's now so precious to me,
All that I wish'd ;---thy soul I would have murder'd :

Fearful offence !---but Jove has well aveng'd it,
Laid in my way that paper, and defeated
All my close guilt. Aid then his righteous vengeance,

With the same dagger that for thee was lifted.

AGHENOR.

Kill me not thus.—Jove, a due difference
Makes between strong necessity and choice.
So let me judge of thee.—Granting thy thoughts
Plotted my death,—in some frail part about thee :
Ah !---my good friend !---of all mankind, there's
no one

Proof to assault :---in that frail part,---thy passion,
Wert thou attack'd.---Some foe, the heav'ns have
made me,

Push'd thee to this ;——with undermining counsel,
Sapping thy gen'rous heart and open nature.

SERJESTAN.

False thy excuses all ;——for I, at once
All murd'ers to outstrip, and make the title
Of villainy renown'd in future annals,
Spurn'd at the goodness that was set before me,
Sinn'd against heav'n, and stifled my conviction.

Sardis

Sardis thy friend,---a friend, so good, thou hast
not.

Like a just man,---with all that eloquence
Virtue can use, endeavour'd to dissuade me :
But,---oh my friend !---a name, which I deserve
not,——

That which he urg'd against this foulest murder
Working within, where all was rage and horror,
Prompted my heart more strongly to perform it.

AGHENOR.

Name it no more.---Thy sorrow seals thy pardon.
Look up, my friend, and speak to thy Aghenor ;
See him, with arms, extended to receive thee
Clasp'd to his heart.---Unfortunate Serjestan !
Whom I with tears lament, forgive and pity,
Either look up, or instantly inform me,
What can be done that may restore thy quiet :
All I will try to shew my friendship for thee,
Bound as I am beyond the pow'r of payment.

ORIXA *within*.

Oh I am sick with speed !---Heav'ns guard Aghe-
nor.

SERJESTAN.

Whose is that voice ?---I would not meet Orixas :
Bear me away, ye whirlwinds from her presence.

AGHENOR.

By our past love, I swear thou shalt not leave me.
Calm thy distracted heart.——I have to utter
Many a last farewell.——'Tis the last service
I can receive, or thou hast pow'r to grant me :

You

You and Orixa, for what cannot friendship?---
Shall with your presence, to this house of horror
Give the faint dawn, till I am call'd to leave it.

SERJESTAN.

Why should I stay? I dare not look upon her.
Torture!---she comes!---surround me night with
darkness.

SERJESTAN. AGHENOR. ORIXA.

ORIXA.

Jove guard my lord.

AGHENOR.

My wife!--my foul!--in language
Where is the name, can shew what thou art to me?

ORIXA.

Art thou in health?

AGHENOR.

When I behold thy face,
How can disease incroach upon my transports?

ORIXA.

But by what fortune has the sword miscarried?

AGHENOR.

In my friend's hand? it had no power to hurt me.

ORIXA.

In thy friend's hand!--oh guard against that serpent.

AGHENOR.

Wrong him not so:—he has a gentle spirit,
Void of all guilt.—The best of us may wander
Wide from the path where virtue spreads her plea-
sure,

But

But when brought back, we persevere more
strongly

In the straight way, and profit by our error.

ORIXA.

You are too good, too bountiful of nature,
And like the lamb, slain in the cruel shambles,
Passive and meek, with love reward your wronger.

AGHENOR.

No more of this,——but, with an eye of pity,
Look on his griefs ;——imagine you behold him,
With his heart broke,—abashment and confusion
Mark'd on his face ;——conceive him, robb'd by
fortune

Of a dear gem,——a gem, whose equal shines not,
In the rich womb of earth ;——thyself that jewel ;
For, e'er we met here first,——he look'd upon
thee

As on his own ;——enlarging then, thy bounty,
Think, it was madness, by that loss occasion'd,
Made him do this ;——and now,—at last,—survey
him

Burden'd with shame, nor daring to behold us,
And, if thou canst, deny him then thy pity.

ORIXA

If he deserv'd forgiveness——

AGHENOR

If---Orix!

Now by that love, which long has grown between
us,

Rive not the honest heart of my Serjeant,

Feel-

Feeling too much already for one error,
With thy sharp taunts ; nor doom thou me to sor-
rows,

More than I else should feel.

ORIXA.

Enough, Aghenor ;
Yours to command ; 'tis mine to pay obedience.---
Cease but to chide, and mould me to your pleasure,
For, if his anguish merits this compassion,
Into his hand, the gods a key deliver,
That may unlock the door of comfort to us,
Save his friend's life, and make us both his debtors.

SERJESTAN.

Oh thou bless'd form !---thy voice is music to me !
Tell me, which way I may deserve thy pardon ?
Where lies the passage to that door of comfort ?
And at the word, though death oppose my en-
trance,

Wing'd like the light, I fly to do thy pleasure.

AGHENOR.

This is most kind ;---but yet, my friend, permit
me,

First,--in thy arms, to hear thee speak my pardon ;
Then thou, in mine, shalt be thyself forgiv'n :
Dost thou draw back ?---sincerely do I speak it.
Nor hast thou yet breath'd thy returning friendship,
On the fair hand of this almost divine one.

SERJESTAN.

Never :---by that great pow'r that now beholds us,
Never, my lips with their unhallow'd kisses,

G

Shall

Shall they prophane the hand of thy Orixá ;
 For with those lips I swore to kill her husband :
 Nor shall these arms, that twice were rais'd to slay
 thee,

Circle thy goodness,——till, by some good action,
 I may look up, and claim the blessing of you.
 Speak then my fair one, and impart thy pleasure :
 Where lies the path may lead me to your wishes ?
 Tell me, for I with ready feet will tread it,
 And my friend save, or die in the atchievement.

ORIXA.

Won by my pray'rs,—when late I knelt before
 him,——

Sardis now tires the royal ear for mercy.
 Hasten then, prince, and fall before your father,
 Join in the suit, nor rise till all is granted,
 If your friend's life or mine be worth preserving.

SERJESTAN.

Bountiful man !—I fly, my friend, to save thee.

OFFICER *entering*.

Sir, from the king,—as is the constant custom,—
 Bring I the warrant for your execution ;
 Therefore prepare, for you must shortly suffer.

SERJESTAN.

Oh ! I will fly,—'tween this and that dread mo-
 ment,

Lies a full hour ;—e'er which, expect good tidings,
 All shall be strain'd to do thee noblest service,
 But if I fail, I mean to suffer with thee.

[*departs.*]

ORIXA.

ORIXA.

Heav'ns give thy pray'rs due weight.—Oh my
Aghenor !

Gladness and joy, once more their lamp enkindling,
Light me to hope :—my father's heart, com-
passion

Gently assail'd, when I presented to him,
As our last hope, his little smiling grandson.
Almost he wept, and made me hope that Sirus,
At his request, would mitigate thy sentence.

AGHENOR.

Did I not tell thee, he was made of mercy,
Ne'er to be thank'd enough ; and yet, Orixas,
If to his wondrous worth, I stand indebted
So beyond speech,—much more, the gods claim of
me,

Who, when Serjestan rais'd his fatal dagger,
When not a pow'r on earth could save me from
it,

Nay when my self, o'ercome with grief, lay sleep-
ing,

Stepp'd in between, and snatch'd me from the dan-
ger.

ORIXA.

But by what means ?—oh !—how I long to know
'em.

AGHENOR.

Seeing this paper I had written to thee.—
For, I much fear'd, their cruelty would rob me

Of the last bliss I wish'd for e'er I suffer'd,
 That of thy sight, to cheer my heart in dying :
 And, for that reason, thus, my mind unburthen'd.--
 Heav'ns ! can words tell thee, with what pain and
 anguish,

Inward I bled ;—for thee, I thought long absent,
 Till, with much weeping, tir'd, a moment's slum-
 ber

Seal'd up my eyes,——when lo ! 'twas then Ser-
 jeftan

Came for my blood,—but, in this paper reading
 Thou wert my wife,—in pity of thy virtue,
 Gentlest compunction stole into his bosom,
 Call'd back his banish'd pity, and disarm'd him.

OFFICER.

Sir, you are summon'd. [bell.]

AGHENOR.

I obey and follow.

Mean while, seek thou the shelter of thy father ;
 I have strong hope, amounting to assurance,
 All will be well ;——return as soon as may be,
 Back to this place,—if thou canst bring good
 tidings,

And my child with thee :—he, to all these horrors,
 With his soft smiles shall give a kind of morning.
 Once more farewell.—Th' auspicious pow'rs of
 heav'n

Cheer my sad heart with whisp'ring that Serjeftan,
 As their disputed proxy, shall preserve me.

ORIXA.

ORIXA.

Great are the effects of virtuous resolution !
I am resign'd, and part without despairing.

AGHENOR.

Thou art all goodness, and 'tis that protects me :
Farewel :——be strong, till I again behold thee.

ORIXA.

Night walks abroad, and darkness spreads her
mantle

Over the world :——if now, we part for ever,
Ne'er let the sun again dispel these horrors.

AGHENOR.

Merciful gods, make short our separation.

SCENE II. *The palace.*

SIRUS. SARDIS.

SIRUS.

Sardis,—no more :—his knell thou hear'ft ring-
ing.

SARDIS.

Pardon me, fir ;—within your royal bosom,
Mercy long fought with justice, in his favour ;
Blame not then me, if I solicit for him.

SIRUS.

Blame thee, I do :—and, to the charge against thee,
Must thou, of force, say “ guilty”. Tell me, Sardis,

G 3

When

When his offence was known but darkly by me,
 And I had yielded to the first impression
 Made on my nature,—from your love to justice,
 Did you not urge his speedy execution :
 And wouldst thou now,—his guilt so broad and
 open,——

Plead for his life ?—What folly has possess'd thee,
 Thus to attempt to work on Sirus' judgment,
 As on a child's ?—with strangest inconsistency !

SARDIS.

Call yet to mind,---and my presumption pardon,---
 How through wide Syria you are fam'd for mercy ;
 And should you now vouchsafe Aghenor pity,
 All your liege people will revere the goodness :
 But, if his fate is fix'd, thus shall they murmur,
 Lo ! one is gone, who, had but Sirus spar'd him,
 Might, in his riper years, have shewn our Syrians
 How he deserv'd the good that's now deny'd him.

SIRUS.

Sardis,——take heed, thy long and faithful service
 Be not to day wip'd out from my remembrance.
 If thou dost urge his life,---I spurn thee from me,
 Which to avoid, be dumb.---To please thy daughter,
 ter,

Shall the law sleep ?——The motive to thy mercy
 Well I divine ;——and am not *I* a father ?
 Have not *I* too a son, whose life and safety
 Claim their regards ?——Condemn'd to death with
 justice,
 Justly he dies.

SER-

SERJESTAN *within.*

Where is my lord and father?

SARDIS. *Aside.*

Hah!---'tis the prince's voice!---heav'ns speed my wishes.

SIRUS. SARDIS. SERJESTAN.

SERJESTAN.

Thus on my knees, let me implore your justice.

SIRUS.

Rise, and receive thy wish completely granted.
Hear'st thou not yonder bell, that to his fortune
Summons the traitor.

SERJESTAN.

Too---too plain, I hear it,
Which, to compleat th' amount of this day's horrors,
Sounds for me also, if that traitor suffers.

SARDIS. *Aside.*

Then he is safe!—Great Jupiter I thank thee!

SIRUS.

Gods! grant me patience:—wouldst thou mock
thy father?

SERJESTAN.

Yes,—I confess with shame how much I've
labour'd
For my friend's death,—and by an act of horror,—
Which, were the time less precious, I could tell
you—
Ruin'd myself:—but now, of all, repenting,

Bound by a solemn oath, I come to save him :
 Oh then, thus humbly bent, let me conjure you,
 Snatching his friend from death, to snatch Serjestan.

SIRUS,

On the deaf winds you call :----his fate is certain.---
 Could I forgive him now,---now, when the motives
 Make his guilt plain,----to thee I should be cruel ;--
 Putting anew, thy life into the hazard.
 Once he has fail'd ;----might he again attempt it,---
 Jove would,---I fear,-----to punish our security
 Give up the man,-----who, trampling on his warn-
 ings,-----
 Gave his self up.

SERJESTAN.

My life, by heav'n protected,
 Would not be safer, than by him, defended.

SIRUS.

Now,——By the pow'rs of Syria,----he *shall* suffer.
 Hence !——and no more, unprofitably urge me.---
 Witchcraft dwells in him,——else thyself resolve
 me ;

Stooping below the honours of her kindred,
 E'er had Orixia listen'd to a beggar ?
 No ;——on my life.-----A charm, he bears about
 him ;

Or the too yielding spirit of that maiden,
 Whom I lament, had never stoop'd to love him.

SERJESTAN.

So much, you speak in pity of Orixia,
 That by her name, I will address your mercy :
 She is his wife,

SIRUS.

SIRUS.

His wife !——whose wife ?

SERJESTAN.

Aghenor's

SIRUS.

Dost thou hear this, or art thou deaf with wonder ?

SARDIS.

Truly he speaks my daughter's disobedience :
Married she is :----a secret, which I knew not,
Till, to procure my pity for the husband,
All was disclos'd.

SIRUS.

Say'ft thou !——My thought's bewilder'd :
Lost in amaze :——I have, and have not hear'd
thee.

When thou saidst married,——didst thou mean
Orixa ?

SERJESTAN.

Oh sir, delay these questions and first save him.
Pleading with me, a poor and friendless infant,
Would,——were he here, and knew his father's
danger,----

Lift up his little hands to gain your pity,
And from on high, bring down the pow'rs of
heav'n,

With his sweet lisping, to make mercy certain.

SIRUS.

No more.——He dies.——His fate is now deter-
min'd.

SER-

SERJESTAN. *Going.*

Stay then and hear me.-----Not whilst I have left
Strength in my arm sufficient to prevent it.

SIRUS.

What would'st thou do?---unsheath thy sword
upon me!---

SERJESTAN.

Hence to the croud.----Away all filial duty.---
With my good sword, I'll hew my passage thro' it,
And my friend save; or failing suffer with him.
[*departs.*]

SIRUS.

Call him again. [*To Sardis, who goes out.*]-at last,
I have bethought me.-----
At the lone time of night.----Grant heav'ns it prosper.----
Dire, tho' it is; for my Serjestan's safety,
What must be left untry'd?

SERJESTAN. *Returning with Sardis.*

Do you then, sir,
Happ'ly relent?---what you resolve,---do quickly.
Swift flies the time,----that shuttle, that's now
busy
Weaving his woes, and soon the work will finish.

SIRUS.

Once more to shew how much thy father loves
thee,
Do I consent to respite him 'till morning:
When, if no proofs appear that he is innocent;
Law shall proceed.

SER-

SERJESTAN.

Why but till then :---till morning?

SIRUS.

This is the utmost I resolve to grant him :
 You shall beside, by all the gods, swear to me,
 Never again to move me in his favour.
 And from this purpose think not to compel me ;
 For, by those gods, most solemnly I swear it,
 Ne'er will I alter this accorded mercy :
 If thou must die,----'twere best thy sorrow for him
 Dug thee a grave,----than, by untimely mercy,
 He should be spar'd for thy assassination.

SARDIS *aside to Serjestan.*

Close with the gift, and, for it's happy issue,
 Solely rely on me.

SERJESTAN.

Must I then swear
 Never again to plead his pardon to you ?
 These are hard terms, and yet to my Aghenor,
 'Tis a night gain'd, and I accept your mercy.

SIRUS.

Swear the condition then.

SERJESTAN.

By all th' immortals.

SIRUS.

Then with my ring,-----it is a well known
 token,---

Haste and prevent his fate :----I will away,
 And in the deep recesses of my palace,
 Amply give scope to gloomiest meditation.

There

There let no eye intrude on my retirement,
 All the night long ;----for, as befits my sorrows,
 Sick'ning at light, I'll hug concealing darkness,
 Dread the next sun, and curse the approach of
 morning.

SARDIS. SERJESTAN.

SERJESTAN.

Oh my good Sardis,----what have I obtain'd
 Following thy counsel ?---the poor respite only
 Of a few hours.

SARDIS.

'Tis in your pow'r to make it,
 Long as the space that nature would allow him.

SERJESTAN.

Dost thou say so ?

SARDIS.

Or much my hopes deceive me,
 Still may he live :---the sentence of to-morrow
 Never perform'd,---if thou dost wish to save
 him.

SERJESTAN.

If I do wish !---my heart is full of wishes.
 Speak then my friend, and instantly inform me
 How he may live.---Thou'lt say, thou 'ast spoke
 already,

But to behold me trample on thy counsel :
 Oh for that fault, Jove knows, how much already
 Conscience afflicts me with her dread displeasure :
 Thine be the pitying part,----that by thy counsel
 Saving

Saving my friend, my soul may some atonement
 Make for its sins ; nor by avenging silence,
 Now, at a time, when, all the pow'rs of pity,
 Lean from the clouds,---each fix'd in deep atten-
 tion,

Lift'ning the sounds that point out his deliv'rance,
 Make my pains more than I have strength to suffer.

SARDIS.

Grieve me not thus.---All will be well and happy.
 As we proceed, I will digest the business :
 Follow me then ;---for ev'ry moment's precious.

SERJESTAN.

Till I know all, conceive me most unhappy.

SCENE III. *The Street.*

AGHENOR and OFFICERS *in procession to execution. The CROWD behind them. [Torches.]*

OFFICER.

Room for the criminal.

AGHENOR.

My friend not come yet ?
 Then must I die.---And yet, for one more meet-
 ing,

How my soul pants.

OFFICER.

'Twould be in vain to hope it.

AGHE-

AGHENOR.

You, that to day come here to see me suffer.
For my last words,----spoke in the gods' high
presence,-----

Lend me an ear.-----I am a loyal subject,
True to my king, and to his son Serjestan,
Whom, on the charge of an attempt to murder,
Am I to die :-----the whole of my ambition
Is the good name of you, my gentle strangers,
When I am dead.—Oh credit not the slanders,
You have heard broach'd,-----but grant me your
compassion.

For my request, I dare to Jove thus proffer,
Upon my head to double ev'ry sorrow,
Here whilst I live, and in the world hereafter,
If I am guilty of the crime I die for.

CROWD.

Peace in the crowd ;-----be silent there,—and hear
him.

AGHENOR.

Think not, good friends, I wish my death should
move you
When I have suffer'd, to avenge it for me :
No ;----let it sleep :----and, may the thoughtless
sinner,
Who to this danger, unprovok'd hath brought
me,——

For at the door of some dark underminer
Does my blood lye,——repent and be forgiven:
Put not this crime into your scale against him

At

At the great day.—To Sirus, you that hear me,
 Still be found just, and honour him as I do;
 For on no throne e'er sat a better sov'reign,
 Gentler in justice, or in mercy richer:
 Sentenc'd by him, 'tis true indeed, I suffer;
 Yet did he all, a judge that's upright can do,
 Nor, till condemn'd on evidence, gave sentence.

OFFICER.

Sir, you've not long to live, be quick and finish.

AGHENOR.

And to his son be dutiful and loving:
 Noble he is,---with all his father's virtues
 Blooming about him:--oh my friends! within you,
 Cherish the fair remembrance of his goodness;
 And when he reigns,---this theme enwraps my
 spirits,
 And I could prophesy, methinks, upon it;
 And when he reigns,---the gods with lib'ral
 bounty,
 Wide o'er the state shall rain their copious blessings,
 More than ev'n now they give you under Sirus:
 For my poor self,---that so have felt his goodness,
 Words are too poor to tell you what I owe him.
 He, in a state of poverty first found me,
 And, from that state,---by Sirus's indulgence,
 Fatally kind,---advancing my low fortune,
 Call'd me his friend:---had I been half so guilty,
 As I am charg'd,---the pow'rs of heav'n can witness,---

Tears

Tears would not now burst forth upon our part-
ing.

CROWD.

Pitiful sight!--his words are lost with weeping!

AGHENOR.

Oh ye immortals! if my pray'rs may reach you,
Upon my friend show'r down your choicest blessings,
And on this head,---as long as life is left me,---
Pour ev'ry woe, that---with the best men living,
Is in your stores laid up for him to taste of.---
I will bear all,---and, in the pains of torture,
Smile at the sense of multiplying horrors,
If but my prince may profit by my sufferings.
Spare my poor father:---let not this day's sorrow
Weigh down his age to death:---he and Orixia
Have my last pray'rs;---I never can forget them.

OFFICER.

This is the last delay we can allow you.

AGHENOR.

Grant me one moment more, and I am ready.
When I am dead,---good officer,---this ring
Give to my wife:---'tis virgin gold,---an emblem
Of her own purity:---it was *her* present.---
And when she put it here upon this finger;---
When she did that,---oh gods!---what liveliest
pleasure

(Is it in woman to impart such feelings!)
Thrill'd through my nerves, in unison wound up,
To give and to receive such melody,

Ev'n

Ev'n to my heart!---but these my transports tire thee.

I will be brief;—at giving it, she said,
Grow there, pale manacle of love,—and if
Thy wearer should prove false, turn paler still,
For thou art stain'd like him:---take, take it then,
And tell her, it returns an evidence,
That to the last, this breast of mine remain'd
Firm in the cause of love;—and tell her too,
Greater than this, I have but one,—one pledge
Of my unalter'd love;—my precious babe.—
Be it a darling to her breast;—and heav'n,
That to the widow and the fatherless,
Deals out his mercies, will perform the rest.

OFFICER.

This will I do most willingly:—lead on.

SERJESTAN *within*.

Bear me, ye winds, upon your lightest wings,
For mercy should be swift:—oh! let me find
Him that I love,—and, with the news I bring,
Snatch him from death.

AGHENOR. SERJESTAN. OFFICERS. and
CROWD.

SERJESTAN.

Yes,—thou art safe, Aghenor.
Hah!—he sinks down;—and look, a deadly
paleness
Spreads o'er his cheek.---Stay his declining head.
Silence that bell:—all sounds of woe be hush'd.

H

Hap-

Happiest of moments, though an age revolve !
Which of you know this ring ?

OFFICER.

'Tis Sirius' signet,
Staying our order for the pris'ner's death.

SERJESTAN.

Look up my friend, and speak to your Serjestan.

AGHENOR.

Where am I, heav'ns ?——death's pains are still
upon me.

SERJESTAN.

Bend, bend him gently forwards :——he relapses.
Talk not of death, I come to free you from it.—
Call back your spirits; you are safe and happy.—
But he regards me not :——to you, good officer,
Must I resign him ;——fast the fleeting moments
Wing their way by ;---and, e'er the approach of
midnight,

Much must be done : when he revives, I pray you,
Say, my return shall be upon the pinions
Of the light winds, on all the wings of friendship.
I have no time to waste in further conf'rence.

[*departs.*]

OFFICER.

Gently support him :——he resumes fresh colour.—
Back to the mosque :——this unexpected respite
Gives to my heart great joy.—Proceed and slowly.

A C T

A C T V.

SCENE. *The dungeon.*

AGHENOR.

THRICE, from the brink of death, have I
 been rescu'd
 Back to new life.—Heav'ns!—through what
 mazy windings
 Lead ye mankind!—what may the certain issue
 Of your great wisdom prove, as yet, I know not;
 But whether destin'd to survive or suffer,
 Still it suffices, that my life and fortune
 Lie in the hands of infinite perfections,
 That are all good.—My wife!—oh! welcome,
 welcome.

AGHENOR. ORIXA. STRATICEE. ACHMET.

AGHENOR.

More than glad light but just restor'd to blindness!
 Welcome thou too, my little smiling infant!
 Both in the arms close lock'd of your Aghenor,
 Take the first fruits of what, once more th' im-
 mortals

H 2

Have

Have for you sav'd.—Thus circling all I value,
Blessing and blest'd,—my happiness were perfect,
Were my friend here, the witness of my transport.

ORIXA.

Perfect indeed! for great is his affection!
Yet,—for a while, consenting to his absence,—
Wish him not here,—till, ripe with thy deliv'rance,
Comes the white moment,—floating on whose
pinion,—
He,—like a god, shall hasten to redeem thee.

AGHENOR.

What dost thou mean?—I do not understand thee.

ORIXA.

Thou shalt know all.—'Twill shortly now be
midnight,
When the grave yawns, and each unquiet spirit
Treads the moist dews, repairing to its treasures
Pil'd up in earth:—that dreadful hour of darkness
O'er its dun mantle shall assume faint morning;
And, from the clouds, a hand draw back the cur-
tain
Thrown o'er the world;—with momentary bright-
ness,
Giving glad welcome to thy friend, who's coming,
Ev'n at that hour, to snatch thee from this place.

AGHENOR.

To snatch me, didst thou say?—speak that again.

ORIXA.

ORIXA.

To snatch thee from this place,—or thou surviv'st
The present night in vain.—To his request,
For thy *free* pardon deaf, the king vouchsafes
Thy respite but till morn;---nay, made him swear,
When, on the coming day-light, thou wert led
To execution,——ne'er again to plead
Thy further pardon:—faithful to that oath,
Though he resolves to prove,---thy rescue still
Lies near his heart;---and therefore, a pick'd band
Of desp'rate ruffians, in our neighb'ring woods,
Selected by himself,——he brings along
To force the prison gates, and set thee free.

AGHENOR.

Impossible!——the gates are strongly watch'd!

ORIXA.

Heav'n has remov'd that hindrance; for ev'n now,
The guards were all drawn off,---whose captain,
Sardis

Has with a large sum brib'd:--these are the tidings,
Which, from my father, I was bid to give thee.
His, was the forethought that contriv'd this pro-
ject,

When thy good friend despair'd of thy redemption.

AGHENOR.

Trust me, I like it not.—I shall be made
The means of bringing ruin on his head:
But be it so:---if fav'd,---for thee, Orixas,
Thee do I live.

ORIXA.

If his intention prosper,
Forth from this friendless spot, we'll fly together ;
We, and our little one :—some kinder kingdom
Happ'ly find out, and pass our lives in loving,
Nor shall thy father be deny'd his portion
Of the delights we feel :—tho' poor, th' example
Of his good age, will fit us for Elysium ;
When, after long observance of his virtue,
Pair'd in our deaths, together we descend
Both to one grave,

AGHENOR.

If he succeeds, Orixas,
This will we do ;—but, if he fails,---hark, hark,
What was that trampling ?

ORIXA.

Trampling ?---I heard nothing.

AGHENOR.

Heard you no noise ?---hark once again ;---the
found
Came that way to my ear.

ORIXA.

Now, now I do.—

A step, not over-hasty ;—but, as if
Unknowing where to tread.—As yet, the night
Is wasted scarce a fourth,---and the twelfth hour
Was fix'd for thy release.

AGHE-

AGHENOR.

It is the king.

Quickly retire:—he must not here observe you.--
In the next cell, thou mayst o'erhear what's ut-
ter'd ;

Nay, loiter not.—I'll lead you forth : be patient.
Lean on my arm.—We shall again meet shortly.
Soft,—let me shut the door.

AGHENOR. SIRUS. OFFICER.

SIRUS.

At this late time

The guard to be drawn off!—strange negligence !
Wait me without ;—nor, under pain of death,
Let any one approach.—Sure this abode,
In ev'ry thing, is like what's feign'd of hell,
Where guiltiest wretches blush not at their crimes,
Such darkness reigns around ;——but here stands
one,

Whose guiltiness, th' impenetrable night,
Doubling about him, would, in vain, conceal :—
If, in despite of shame, thou canst look up,
Say who am.

AGHENOR.

My king.

SIRUS,

I have been more.

AGHENOR.

A thousand things besides,—which, you are still;
My tongue can never speak them, but my heart
Is mindful of them all;—for you have been
A father to my youth; whom the great gods
Employ'd as their first means, to plant me where
I had no right of growth.

SIRUS.

And therefore thou,
Against this friend, this father, and this king,
Plantedst the battery of ingratitude;
Wounding his heart, where, only, heav'n had
made it
Open to pain.

AGHENOR.

Oh! kill me,—kill me not
With agony, more grievous than the pains
Which morning must produce:—from Sirus' hand,
A poinard's point had been more merciful.

SIRUS.

Hah!—sayst thou?—Speak again.—

AGHENOR.

For oh!—from you,
Whose welfare,—as my patron, and my king's,
Has been the subject of my thoughts by day,
And of my prayers each night,—this language
wounds
Beyond the reach of steel.—The sword would
kill,

And

And but its office do, whilst this sad heart,
Leaping to meet the point, and so be free
From ev'ry pain it feels,——would welcome it
As the impatient bridegroom, sick with love,
Does the appointed night.

SIRUS.

Then see it here ;——
The dagger thou desir'st :——by fortune put
Into thy hand :——take it,---and, if thou hast
Ev'n half a wish, thy king should be redress'd,
Use it and save his son,

AGHENOR. SIRUS. ORIXA. STRATICEE.

ACHMET.

ORIXA.

Help Straticee !——
I can refrain no more :——touch not the sword.

SIRUS.

Orix, art *thou* here ?——with him combin'd ;
Ev'n thou hast wrong'd me too.—Avoid my sight,
Nor, let thy presence the good deed defeat,
Which here I came to do ;—for, from the wretch
Sentenc'd by justice to a ling'ring death,
Under the tort'rer's hand,——the gift I bring
Deserves a welcome sure.

AGHENOR.

My love, be calm ;
Nor speak again.—Use this, and save thy son !
How should I save him so ?

SIRUS.

SIRUS.

Dissembling wretch !

To ask what thou well know'st.—Give, give me
back,

My lost unhappy son.—Hark, ruffian, hark ;—
Or say, where thy enchantments cause him now
To weather the damp night, or woe befall
Thy execrable head.—Yet, I am calm.—
Use then the sword, and execute, thyself,
The sentence of the law, so shall he think
The suicide occasion'd by thy guilt,
And pity thee no more.

AGHENOR.

No :—by an act,
Desp'rate like that, I should indeed be guilty.

SIRUS.

Coward !——to make the deed familiar to thee,
Think of to-morrow, when the sun shall rise
Red in thy blood ; and setting, still behold thee
Quiv'ring with life :——in time, prevent those
torments ;

Mercy holds forth her hand,---accept the offer
E'er 'tis drawn back, and thou be lost for ever.

OFFICER *entering*.

Retire, dread sir, and save yourself ;——a band
Of ruffians, arm'd and mask'd, attack the guard
Brought with you here. Hark ! they approach apace.

AGHENOR.

Oh ! haste and stay their hands : ——it is the son
Of Sirus, leads them on.

Si-

SIRUS.

Great heavens!—my son!—
Fly,—and command our guard to sheathe their
fwords.

Bid them give way, and let the assailants pass;
Nor offer to oppose.

OFFICER.

Ho!—on your lives.—
'Tis the king's pleasure that his guard throw
down
Their arms, and cease the fray.

AGHENOR. SIRUS. ORIXA. STRATICEE.

ACHMET. SERJESTAN. and his PARTY.

SERJESTAN.

Charge home:—they yield,
And leave our passage free.—My brother!
friend!—

In happy time, I come to set thee free.
Help;—help me all;—My father!—what means
this?

SIRUS.

Ungrateful as thou art!—I own the name:
But tell me,—what art thou?

SERJESTAN.

No matter what.—
For till the purpose I'm now pregnant with,
Be happily atchiev'd,—my name is lost,
And the soft influence of nature's law,

Claims

Claims not 'till then dominion in my heart.

SIRUS.

To me do you speak this! henceforward, heavens,
All yearning of paternal fondness turn
Into the bitterest gall!—let fathers take
Example here from me; and by my fate
Taught to be wise,—may that o'erweaning wretch
Be for a fool, hung up to public scorn
That shall adopt a child.

SERJESTAN.

Take back the gift;
And give me, in exchange, the peace of mind
Which I enjoy'd far hence, when I was thought
The brother of my friend.—What have the fruits
Of your adoption been?—oh would to heav'n!
I had ne'er trod in your detested court;
The arts which flourish there,—unknown to men
That walk in humbler life,—have ruin'd me.

AGHENOR.

Thus on the ground, before the king and you
I kneel, and must be heard.—Th' offended
 heavens
Frown to behold you lab'ring to divide
Nature's great chain.—Make not your friend the
 cause
Of this unnat'ral strife.—The gods well know,
Since I divine my life would plant a thorn
In the king's side,—to make his slumber sweet,—
'Tis my desire to die.

ORIXA.

ORIXA.

If you are just,
 Regard not his wild wish:—the pray'r he makes
 His reason would disown;—for he is mad;
 His suff'rings and misfortunes make him so.
 You are yourself a father and well know
 What parents hold most dear:—oh! let me then
 Soothe you to mercy in a mother's name.—
 Close by my side, my Achmet too shall join me:
 Turn not away;—that heart is hard indeed
 That knows not how to yearn, when infants raise
 Their little hands to heaven.—The gentle lamb,
 All pity save the wretch that spills his blood;
 But you are no such wretch; be therefore kind
 To this poor lamb,——and, when retir'd we live
 Like hermits on the produce of our toil;
 For we will spend the remnant of our days,
 At distance from your court:——so, never shall
 Aghenor have the means of inj'ring you
 In his friend's life;——I'll teach the babe to tire
 Heav'n's ear with pray'rs for blessings on your head,
 Making it all the business of his life:
 Nor need he toil for bread:—Jove, that supports,
 Not the large ostrich only, but the air
 Makes pregnant with a thousand atomies
 To cherish the small fly,——shall feed him for it.

SERJESTAN.

Canst thou hear this, and not be mov'd like all
 Whose hearts are warm'd with blood?—enchantment
 sure

Dwells

Dwells in these walls, converting ev'ry breast
 Into unpitying flint!—the charm I'll break :—
 Knock off his chains ;---obey,---or, with my sword
 Will I make horrid massacre amongst you.

SIRUS.

Yet be appeas'd :---make known your wish to me :
 Tho' my heart bleeds with your ingratitude,
 Still will it throb with all a father's love :
 And lest thy life should be again expos'd
 To the none pitying sword,---whose point, so lately
 Fate ward'd off,---I will grant all :---what would'st
 thou ?

SERJESTAN.

Life for myself,---and freedom for my friend.---

SIRUS.

Then he is free :---loose him and let him go :---
 For thy own self ;---what's in my pow'r to grant,
 Freely receive :---live happily and long ;
 But, for the future,---never see me more.

ALL.

Long live the king !

AGHENOR.

Hah !---he is fainting !---off
 With your vain cares !---what means this sudden
 change ?

SERJESTAN.

Oh I am chang'd indeed !---I have not strength
 Left in my limbs, enough to cast myself
 At my kind father's feet.

AGHENOR.

Thou hast no wound ?

SER-

THE FRIENDS. III

SERJESTAN.

A wide one;—and, I think, quite through my heart.

SIRUS.

Fly hence for instant help!—my crown to save him!

SERJESTAN.

Call not for help :—'twould now, be useless to me;
Rage gave me strength and courage, to endure
Patient my wound,-----till what I wish'd, was
granted.

And, as a messenger, before he journeys,
Waits for a final audience, to receive
Some secret of importance to his errand :
So, did my life, delay to quit its dwelling,
Till the glad word of freedom for Aghenor
Sung in my ear; and now, oh now !-----my spirit
Hastes to depart.

SIRUS.

Oh my unhappy son!

AGHENOR.

Dearest of men,---your rashness has undone me !
If I am thus, to purchase life and freedom,
Would I had dy'd before this fatal rescue !
It will, I fear, distract your father's bosom;
And when thou'rt dead,-----to add to my affliction,-----

I, as the cause of all, shall be upbraided.

SERJESTAN.

No,-----on my soul sir, he is innocent

Of

Of my design :-----so perfectly he lov'd me,-----
 That, had he known the meditated project,
 He would have told the secret, to prevent
 What has now happen'd :-----do not then, my
 ashes,
 Grieve in the tomb, by vengeance on Aghenor.----
 Should you do so,-----my ghost will haunt your
 slumbers,
 Never to rest, till murder's fully punish'd.

SIRUS.

Ev'n as thou wilt :——my word's already given,
 Tho' were it not,——if thou must die Serjestan,
 All things in life become indiff'rent to me.
 Wrath and revenge may then for ever slumber.

SARDIS *entering*.

Why this alarm that wakes the sleeping city ?

SIRUS.

Sardis,—thou com'st to see thy king most wretched;
 Look, but thou canst not :—the dire fight before
 thee
 Curdles thy blood, and thou art seiz'd with trem-
 bling.

SERJESTAN.

Ev'n as thou see'st !——the issue of thy counsel
 Comes but to this !

SIRUS.

Say that again :—*his* counsel ?---
 Was it then *he*, that plann'd this fatal project ?

SERJESTAN.

What if it were ?——I meant not to upbraid him ;
 Could he divine the end ?

SIRUS.

SIRUS *stabbing* Sardis.

Get thee beneath,
And thy advice,—impart—pernicious monster
There to the damn'd.

SARDIS *falling*.

Protect me!—save me heav'ns!

SERJESTAN.

What have you done?

ORIXA.

Alas!—my father's slain!—

SIRUS.

That thou may'st speak me fair in the next world
Thou'rt going to, my son;—this bloody deed,
I can with ease excuse.—Upon his head
Lies all the guilt, and all the sorrow of
This fatal day;—for had not he been by
When thou didst first thy intercession make,
Like wax, in the sun's beams,—thy father's heart
Had yielded to thy tears;—but he stepp'd in,
Ev'n privately, and made my bosom hard
Against the sense of mercy.

SARDIS.

This and more

I have been guilty of:—send,—quickly send
For Moroc,—the offended powers of heav'n
Write up, in characters of flaming size,
My crimes upon the wall.—I bleed apace.—
Bring therefore Moroc forth, and let him speak,
Whilst I essay to make my soul's lost peace,
Who, most unjustly, have accus'd the man,

I

That

That never,—never fought Serjestan's life :

SIRUS.

Run officer, and bring him instantly.—

[*to Aghenor, offering to speak.*] I know what thou
wouldst say ;—yet speak it not,—

Unless thou hast heav'n's pow'r, to snatch my son
From the cold arms of death.—That thou didst
not

Conspire against his life, makes nothing light
The sorrows I must bear ;—for lo he dies ;
And, for the means, they're equal to me all.

SERJESTAN.

Oh--turn and look on me.—Jove truly truly knows,
How, in the hour of death, I joy to find
Thus, at the last, thy innocence made plain.
That Sardis should accuse thee, seems most strange.
Give me your hand.—Save me,---one circumstance;
Oh pardon that ;—I have liv'd like your friend.
And let me now, so die.—With your kind arm,
Raise and support my head, that swims in clouds :
Trust me, I fear, I have not life enough
Left in my veins, to hear this mystery
Unravell'd and made plain.---I think they come.

AGHENOR.

I think so too.---Support yourself on me.

SERJESTAN.

I do ;---I do :---this friendship is most kind !

SIRUS *to Moroc entering guarded.*

You tremble and that's much---for you have done
A guiltier deed, than what is register'd

In

In the long list of sin.---See how already,
Jove rains his vengeance on it,---and to shun
Much of your punishment, confess in haste
All that you know.

MOROC.

In ev'ry point I will.

SARDIS.

As what the moor can say,---on his own head,
Reflects not the least crime ;---if I have leave,
I'll question him myself :---so shall I be
My own accuser ;---and, that way,---of heav'n
Merit some share of mercy.----Say, who 'twas
Put you upon the deed ?----speak to the king.

MOROC.

My master that lies there.

SARDIS.

Was you enjoyn'd

To kill the prince, or how ?

MOROC.

My orders were

No more than to use threatnings, and find out
Some circumstance, that might the guilt confer
On his friend's head :---unluckily, Aghenor
Seiz'd on Serjestan's sword, which I improv'd
Into the hint of leaving the prince bare
To my attack.

SARDIS.

As I am now to die,

The man speaks truth.---What reasons did I give
To justify this crime ?

I 2

MOROC.

MOROC.

He told me, sir,

A foolish prophecy disturb'd you much
Touching the prince :——that, would I but attempt it,

I might restore you to the happiness
You had long lost ;——that, to preserve *my* life
You would stand bound to heav'n ;——and, to remove

All I could urge,——he would his pow'r with you
Stretch to the utmost for Aghenor's pardon.

SARDIS.

That's all he knows :——yet have I more of guilt
To answer for above.——The promis'd boon
For this attempt,—enfranchisement from bonds,
I purpos'd by his murder to avoid
Concealing so my crimes :——nay more ;——in fear
Aghenor would be spar'd,—I urg'd the prince
To assassinate his friend ;——so gilding o'er
My words with utmost art, that they appear'd
Dissuasive of the deed ;——yet, serpent-like,
That under cover of a painted coat
Carries a pois'nous sting, inflam'd him to it.

AGHENOR.

Is't possible ;——I never gave you cause.

SARDIS.

It was to cut you off,—I tried all this.
Which I conceiv'd to be the only way,
Left to effect the prince's easier road
To my child's heart.

SER-

SERJESTAN.

Oh now I die!--I die!--
My spirit's on the wing,---and will not stay
To hear this story out.---Orix, turn
One moment from that object, and, to me,
Pronounce the word of pardon :---all I can,
To wash away my guilt, in the attempt
Of shedding my friend's blood,---I have perform'd :
What yet is left to do, I will discharge
When my breath goes, with unregretting looks
Of comfort and delight,---if you forgive.

ORIX.

If I forgive!---tears intercept my voice,
And will not let me speak :---let it suffice,
They fall for thee :---I pity, and lament
Thy most untimely fate.

SERJESTAN.

Then all is well,
And I request no more.---For my sake, sir,
Cherish my friend, and this fair treasury
Of all things that are good.---Forgive these men,
Th' associates of my fault.---Darkness comes on.--
Here let me die.---Through life it was my wish,
So to expire.---Orix!--father!--friend! ---
Farewel to all. [dies.]

OFFICER.

Look to the king!--he faints.

SARDIS.

What is he dead?

I 3

ORIX

ORIXA.

Waste not your strength with speaking.
Lean on my arm.

SARDIS.

To vindicate thy father;
Hear his last words.—I thought, indeed, to
make thee
Wife to a prince;—but, finding that Aghenor
Master'd thy heart,—I then began to hate him.—
Hadst thou but own'd thou wert already married,
All had been chang'd.—To trifle with thy father!
That was not well.—Hadst thou been honest
with me,
This my unhappy fate had been prevented;
Yet do not weep,—for I forgive thy error,
Knowing the cause.

SIRUS.

Merciless horrid villain!
Jove shall be just, and with eternal woes
Visit your issue; whilst to latest ages,
All my afflictions,—an exhaustless cup!—
Tender'd to them;—who know me, shall declare,
Sirus still lives.

SARDIS.

If Jove must curse,—be curs'd
Those lying priests, who thirsting after lucre,
Forg'd this prediction,—but for which, Serjestan
Still had been safe.—Can failing human wisdom
Read the decrees of heav'n?—The poor and abject,
They

They who want gold to bribe them for oblations,
Never are threaten'd with such impious omens :
Upon their heads transfer this day's misfortunes,
But for whose arts, Sirus no son had lost,
Sardis no future heav'n.

OFFICER *entering*.

An aged man,
Standing without,—by travelling long, grown
weary,

Begs, in the name of Jupiter, admision :
Something he has of moment, to deliver
Into your ear.—Shall we permit him entrance ?

SIRUS.

Ev'n as you will.—How is it now with Sirus ?
Oh my torn heart !—for ever hast thou left me ?
Would I had dy'd with thee !

PHAREL *entering*.

Where is my son ?
Where is my child ?—oh where ?—lead me in
haste :

I have a stag's will,—but an old man's feet.—
Hah !—as I fear'd.—I come to find him dead.
Just is my fate !

SIRUS.

Peace, babbling fool.

AGHENOR.

My father !

SIRUS.

SIRUS.

Hence from my sight ;—for now, I recollect thee !
Hence with thy son to earth's remotest corners :
Oh ! would to heav'n, the hour had ne'er existed,
When he first breath'd !

PHAREL.

Forbear awhile these transports :
Soon wilt thou pity me.—I, of my child,
Have been to-day bereav'd :---still thou hast thine
Left to delight thy eye.—Him, that lies here,
Thus do I claim, who, for his father's folly,
Dearly has paid :---prophane not then my sorrows,
I will be proud of them.—This was my son,
And he is dead.

AGHENOR.

I fear my father raves.

Look but at me.

PHAREL.

Away ;---I know you not.
And to prevent intrusion on my sorrow,
Bare thy right arm :---there's what will ravish Sirus.

AGHENOR.

The stain of a pine leaf ?

SIRUS.

Speak that again !

AGHENOR.

The stain of a pine leaf,---my mother long'd for,
When I was born.

SIRUS..

SIRUS.

Haft thou a mark like that ?

AGHENOR.

Sirus, I have.

SIRUS.

By Jupiter, I charge thee,
Shew it me straight.

AGHENOR.

'Tis here above my wrist ;
On the right arm.

SIRUS.

See my eyes clear or no ?

SARDIS.

A pine leaf on his arm !---oh wretch !---oh mad-
man !

SIRUS.

As thou would'st merit blifs,---inform me, Sardis,
Had not my child that mark ?

SARDIS.

These eyes beheld it,
When 'twas first born.

PHAREL.

Ev'n so ; and that child was
Aghenor, that stands there.-----The queen, his
mother,

Deeming her babe not out of danger's reach,

Though in our cottage hid :---you, unconsulted,---

Tamper'd with us apart ;---when, yielding to her,

Did

Did we our son call yours ;---fatal ambition !---
Now by his death, deservedly thus punish'd.

SIRUS.

Say that again, and I indeed am happy.

PHAREL.

Would I could not.---This arm, you may discover,
Hath not that mark upon't.

SIRUS.

'Tis so ;---'tis true ;

And I remember now,---when my good queen
Lay near her death,---something, tho' indistinct,
Spoke she concerning this ;---which her attendants
Thought she said ravingly,---and therefore slighted.

PHAREL.

Soon as the news of the intended murder
Reach'd my abode :---for he, that bore the tidings,
Nothing distinctly knew of what he utter'd :
Scar'd with the story, I resolv'd that instant,
Which was e'er sun-set,---to divulge the secret,
And in all haste set out to gain the city ;
Where,---after six long hours of painful travel,
Am I now come ; and this sad sight before me,
Jove has reserv'd to welcome my arrival.

ORIXA to Sardis.

If thou must die,---I never shall be happy.

SARDIS.

Do not say so :---'tis just that I should suffer,
And to excess.---The heav'ns thou seest, Orixas,
In the discov'ry of Aghenor's birthright,
Tell me, my purpose had been amply crown'd,

But .

But for the means I us'd.—Ye pow'rs above us,
 Look on my suff'rings with an eye of pity;
 And, to shew more your goodness,---blefs my
 daughter:

Blefs her and doubly;—in herself and offspring.
 Pardon of you, let me request Aghenor,
 As you would wish the guilt of this my murder
 Should not on Sirius fall.—You, that behold me,
 Pray for my soul:—my tongue forgets its office.
 Moroc is innocent:---have mercy, heav'ns! [*dies.*]

SIRUS.

Pardon me, gods,---that the unbounded transports
 Rioting here,---take from my memory
 Where I now am:—the house of death, pro-
 phaning
 With the loud echoes of my wanton gladness
 For a found son.—Come to my arms and quickly,
 There let me meet thee with a father's fondness:
 And, on my knees, thanks up to heav'n surren-
 der.

Since, all the ways I fashion'd to remove thee,
 Jove so made vain:—but still, I see thou'rt
 fetter'd:

Be it thy wife's glad office to redeem thee.
 Stoop, and assist her all.

ORIXA.

My lord and husband!

AGHENOR.

Take, take me both.—You, as a son most loyal:
 You, as a bridegroom, eager for possession,

As

As when at first the priest pronounc'd thy beauties
Lawfully mine.—If I dare call you father,
See your own image here, and bless its wearer,
Making my joy compleat.

SIRUS.

And is this then
The pretty innocent; who, had not heav'n
Stepp'd in between, were now almost an orphan,
Owing his loss to me?—Dumb eloquence
Dwelt in that tongue, persuasive as a seraph's,
When, like a blind mole, working in the dark,
I for destruction dug,—or sure the heavens,
Granting my wish, had made me the most wretched
Crawling on earth.—Grow up my little charmer,
Rich in the virtues of thy gentle mother;
And, for a better fortune, scorn to kneel
At the proud foot of any monarch living.

AGHENOR.

What shall I say or do?—I scarce could credit
Give to this change of fortune, did not heaven
Tell me 'tis so:—and now I feel within me
Such an unusual joy, such gracious transports,
As can come only from th' inspiring heavens:
Nothing but this can possibly allay them.

SIRUS.

An honourable fun'ral shall he have
For he has been my son;—and, good old man,
The counsel my own sorrows would not take
On you will I bestow.—Grieve not to see
Thy son bereft of life;—virtue like his,

Dies not with mortal nature, but survives
 To reign beyond the stars.-----A monument,
 Shall to his mem'ry rise ;-----and, grav'd in gold,
 The story of his life, be handed down
 To unborn generations ;-----that whilst he
 In the elysian plains, lives ever bless'd,
 Men may observe, and copy his example,
 So to deserve like him.

AGHENOR.

Over his tomb
 Shall from these eyes, the dews of sorrow fall
 Wetting the earth ;-----nor, 'till a zodiack's course
 Hath been gone round, will I admit one thought
 Of more than friendship here:-----'tis the least
 proof
 Of my great love, and should it not be paid,
 Jove would, I fear, upon my marriage bed
 Rain down sharp thorns, and make that happy
 place
 A state of mis'ry.

ORIXA.

Woman tho' I am,
 I blame not but applaud thy piety :
 Let it be so :-----and, not to be outdone,
 I, the like time, in sorrow will consume
 Over my father here :-----our mourning past,
 We shall be happier both, ceasing to love,
 For purposes so good.

SIRUS.

SIRUS.

Nor shall the eyes
Of Sirus be less lib'ral of their tears ;
For my recoiling breast,-----beholding this,----
Tells me, I've done amiss :-----pray'r must wash
out

The mem'ry of the action, from the book
Where 'tis enroll'd :-----and, to these pious two
That I, the vow may keep, will I my crown,
Retinue, dignity and place resign ;
And, at a distance from the cares of state,
Retiring with thy age, to them look up ;
Pleas'd to receive my share of happiness
With such as are call'd subjects.-----Come away.



THE END.

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THE author, after thanking the subscribers in general, and those in particular, who have so kindly exerted their influence in his behalf, takes the liberty to hint his intentions, of keeping the subscription still open; and if, on perusal of the preceeding sheets, the reader should meet with any entertainment, he hopes that his importunity will not be ascribed to a mercenary principle, when he requests a continuance of favour from such ladies and gentlemen as have already honoured him, and the assistance of those who may be inclined to oblige him in future, with their recommendation. The second publication, with which he proposes giving a new subscription list, will take place the latter end of February; and, in the interim, he intends, once more, to intrude on the patience of his present subscribers, by paying them another personal application, in order to receive those commands, with which any of them may think proper to favour him: and, with respect to the subscription price, he intends to regulate the second publication, in the same manner as he has done the first; that is, no money will be required till delivery of the book, so that the name and residence of any person chusing to subscribe, if communicated to the author, through their obliging means, will be sufficient.

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